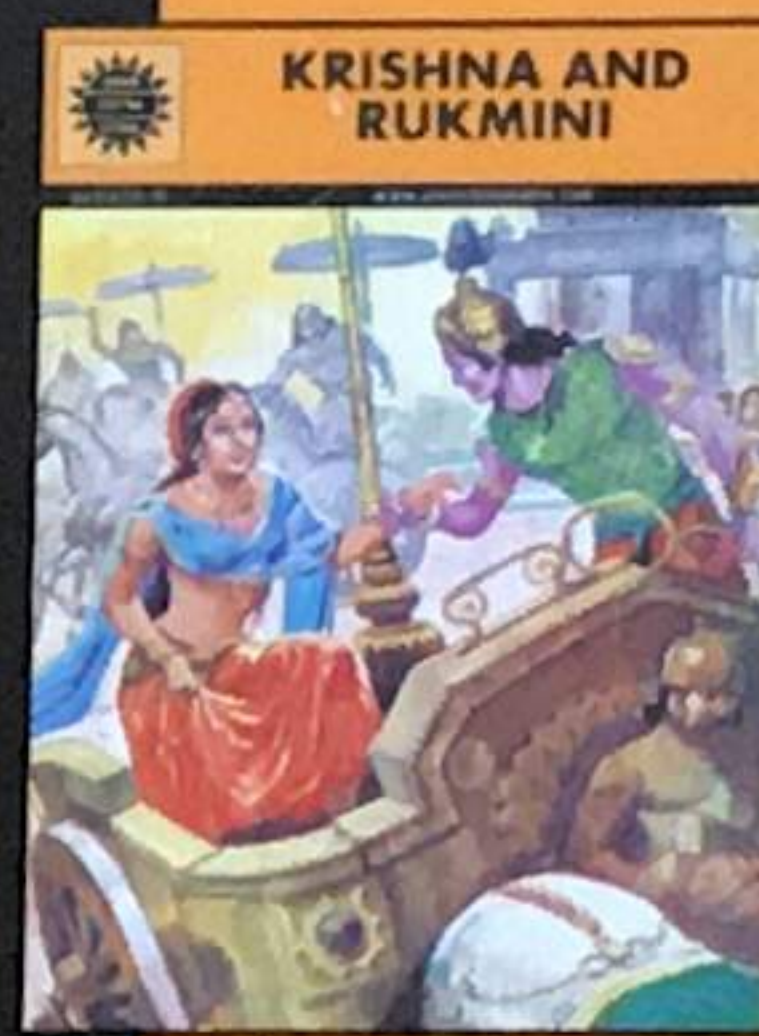
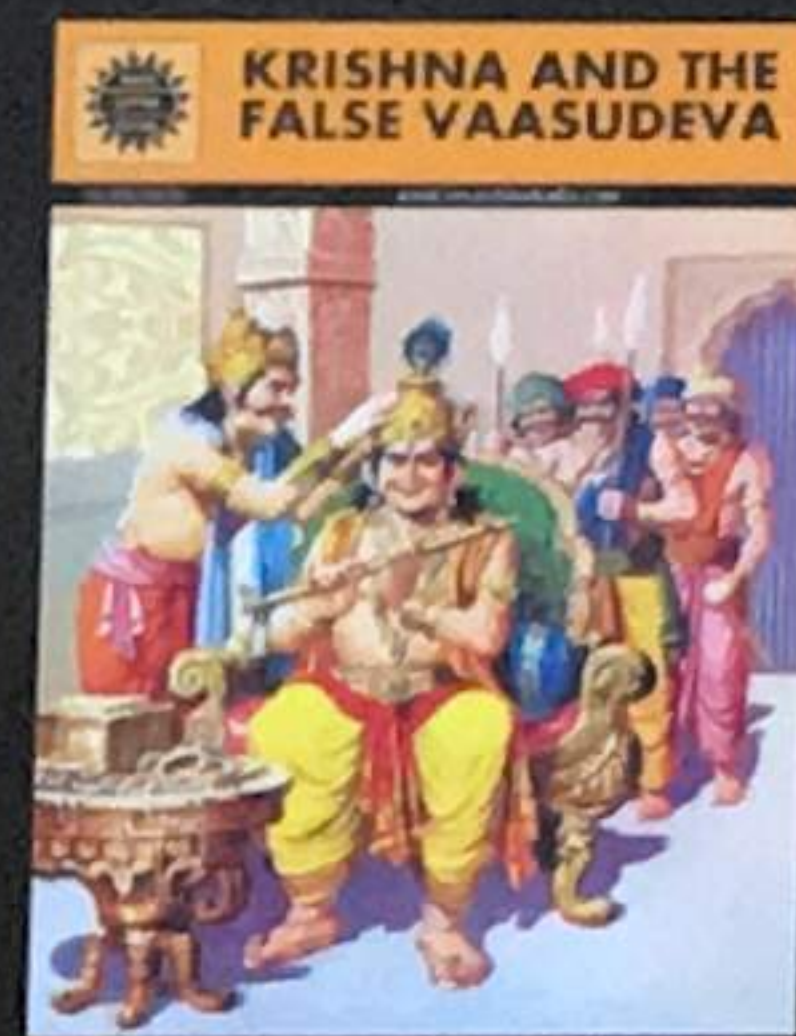
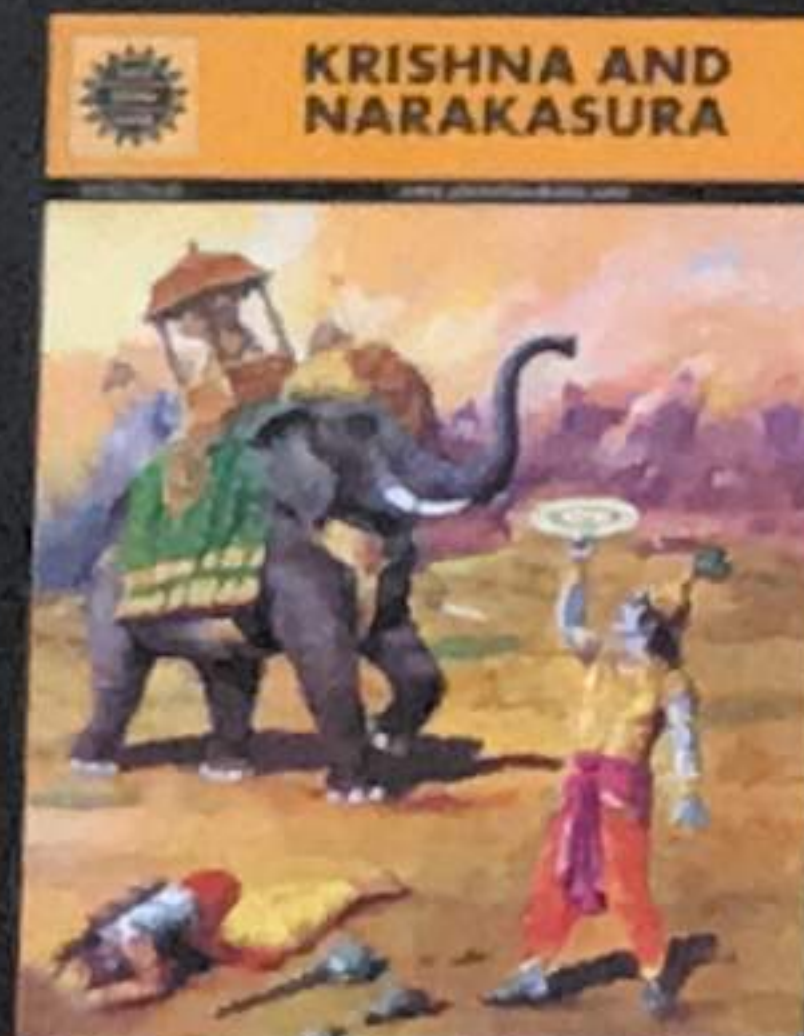
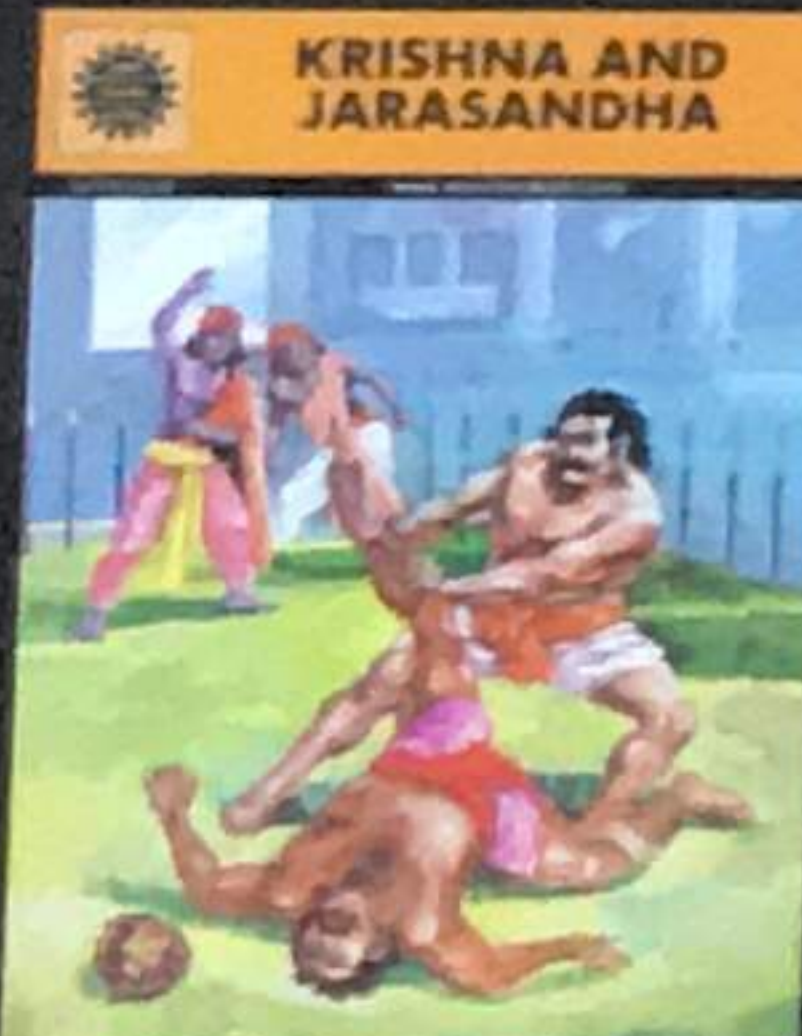


KRISHNA AND SHISHUPALA

Shishupala's mother was shocked when she came to know that her child was destined to be killed by Krishna. She extracted a promise from him that he would forgive Shishupala a hundred offences. As he grew up Shishupala had enough reasons to be angry with Krishna. Especially after he was jilted by Princess Rukmini, in favour of the merry-eyed cowherd. He provoked Krishna repeatedly and was forgiven a hundred times. And then one day Shishupala committed his hundred and first offence.

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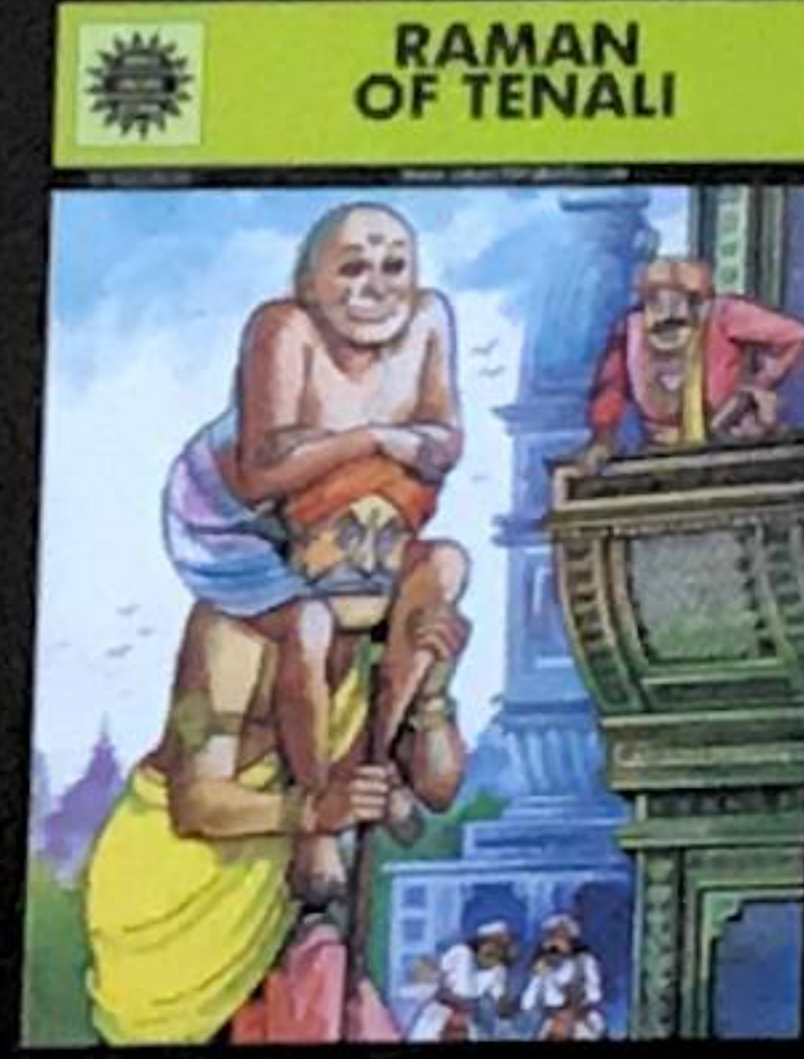
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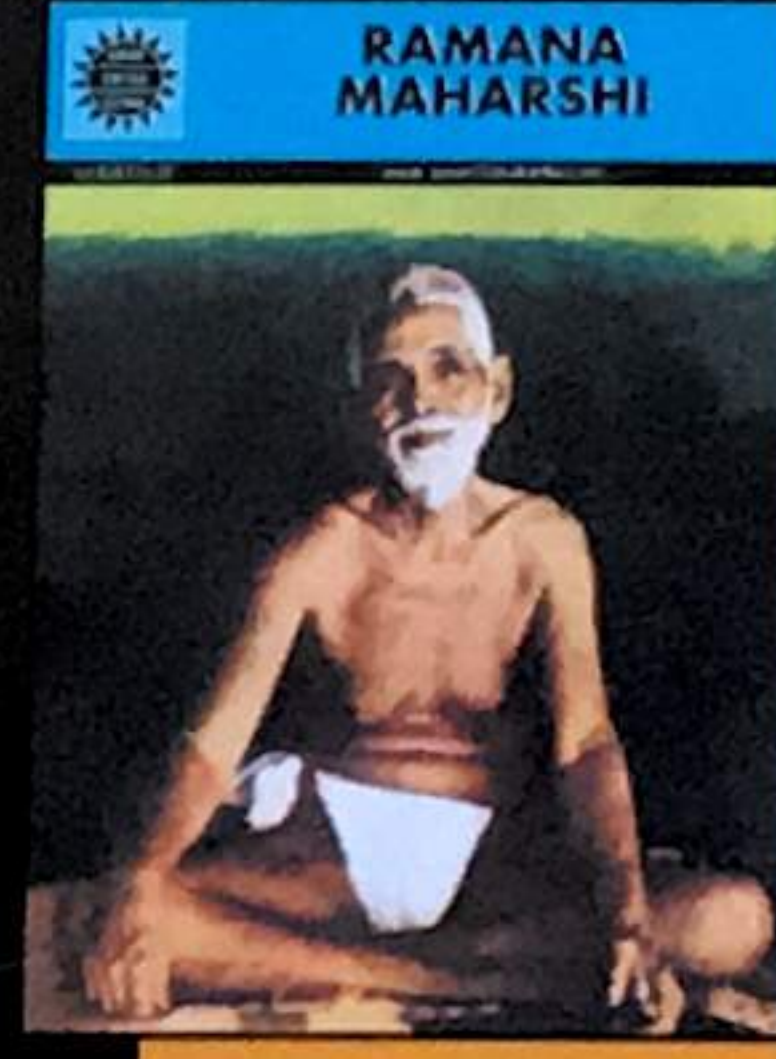
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KRISHNA AND SHISHUPALA

HE WAS FORGIVEN A HUNDRED TIMES

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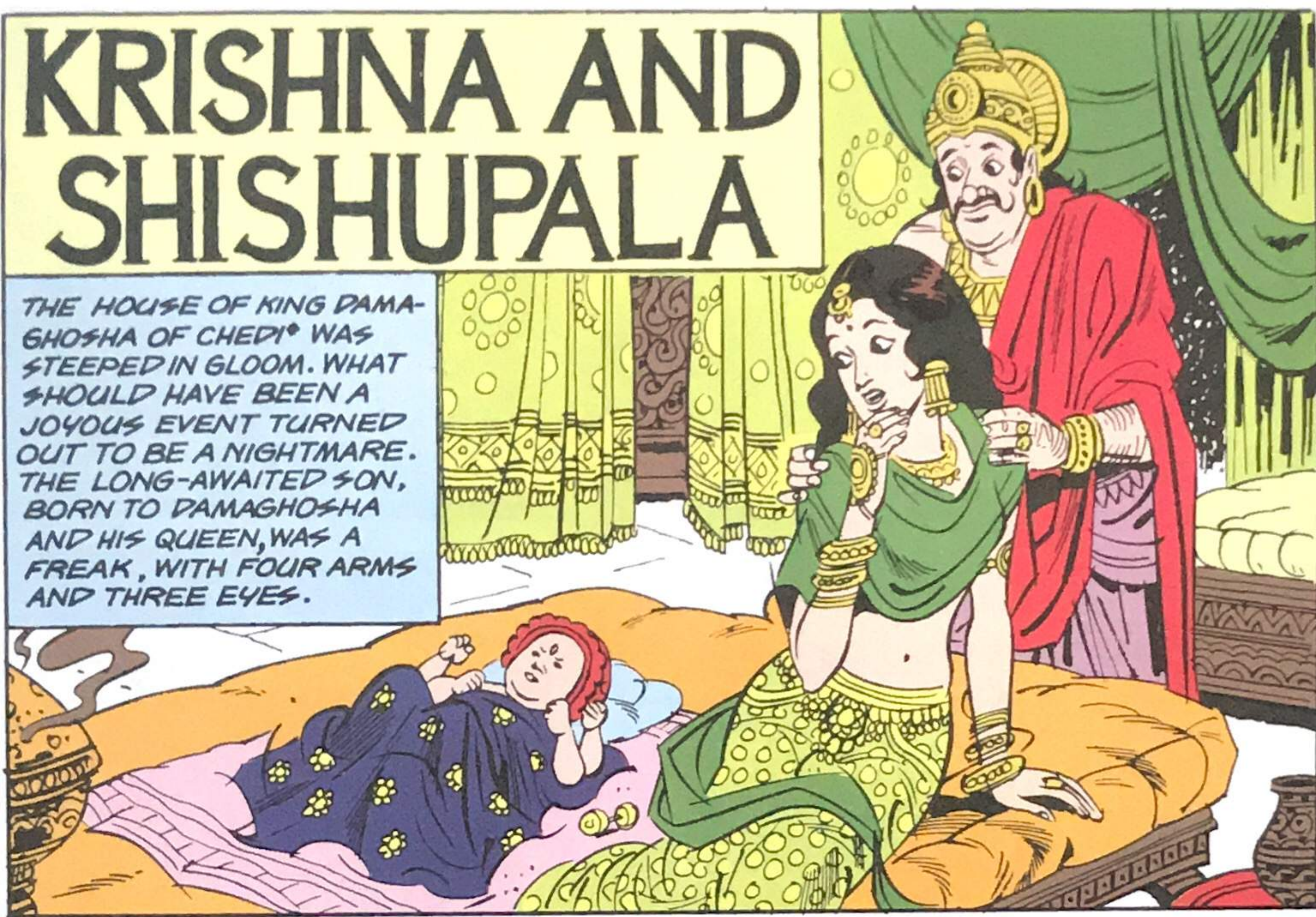
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KRISHNA AND SHISHUPALA

THE HOUSE OF KING DAMAGHOSHA OF CHEDI WAS STEEPED IN GLOOM. WHAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN A JOYOUS EVENT TURNED OUT TO BE A NIGHTMARE. THE LONG-AWAITED SON, BORN TO DAMAGHOSHA AND HIS QUEEN, WAS A FREAK, WITH FOUR ARMS AND THREE EYES.



AND HE SCREAMED AND BRAYED LIKE AN ASS.

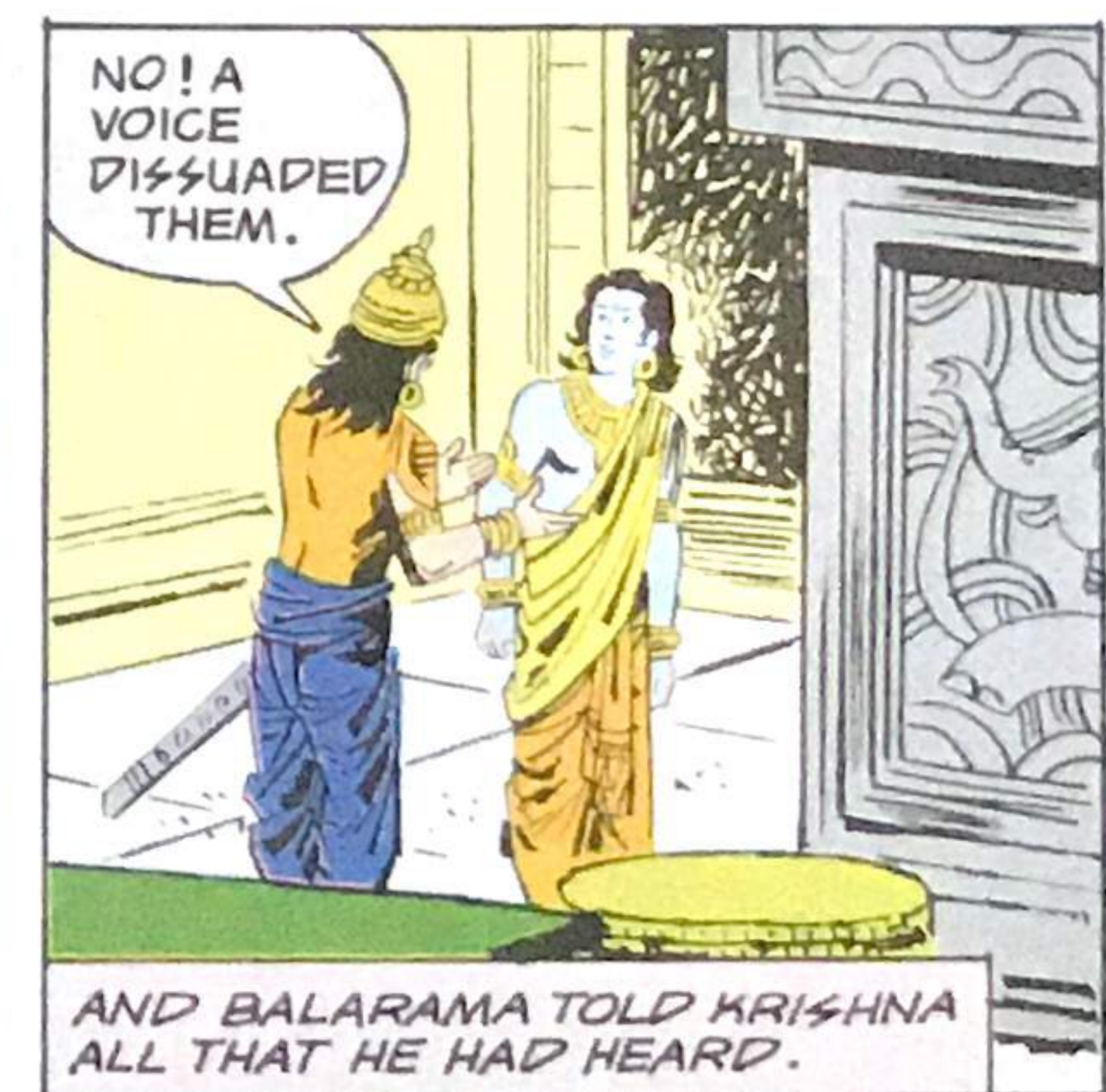
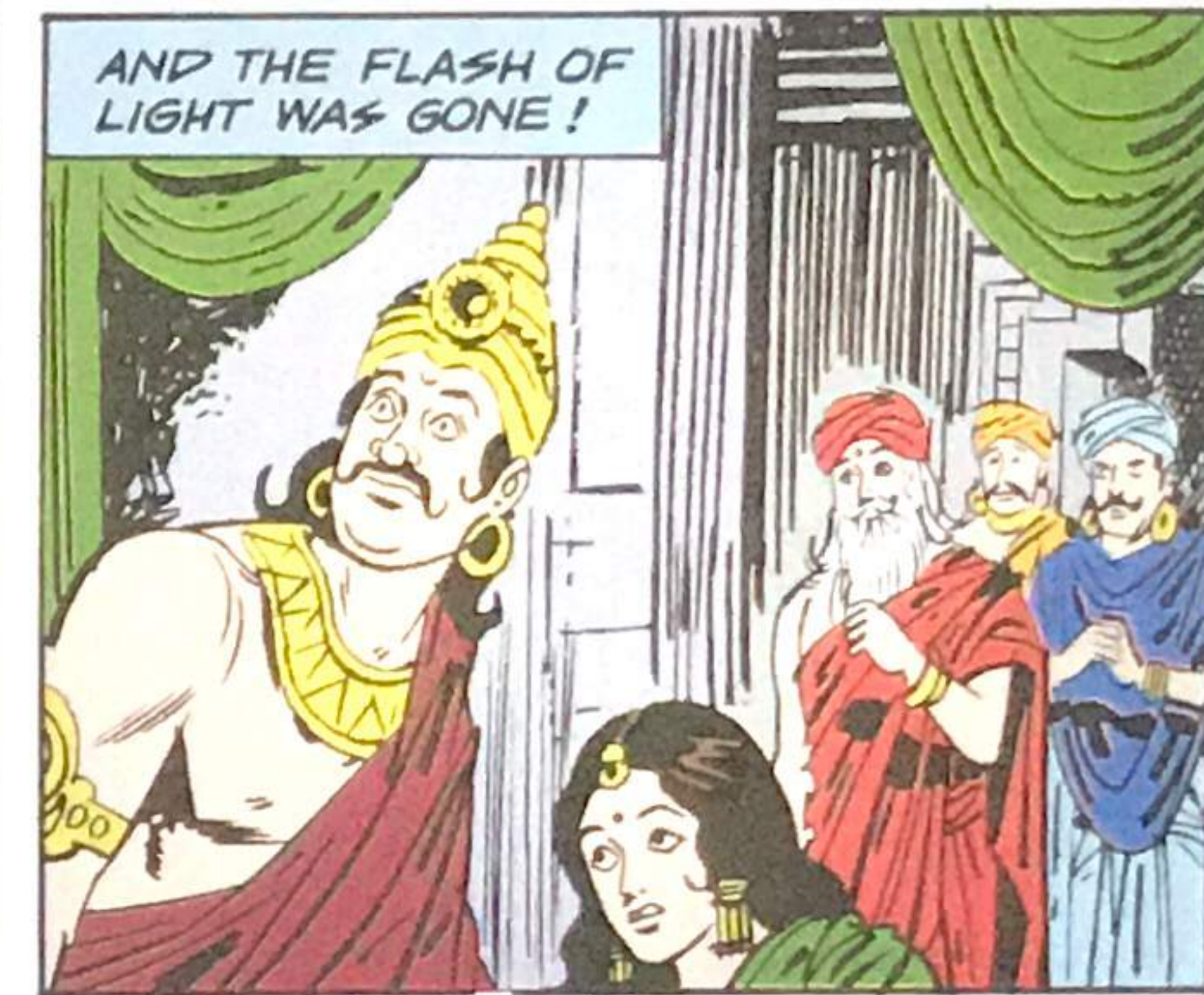
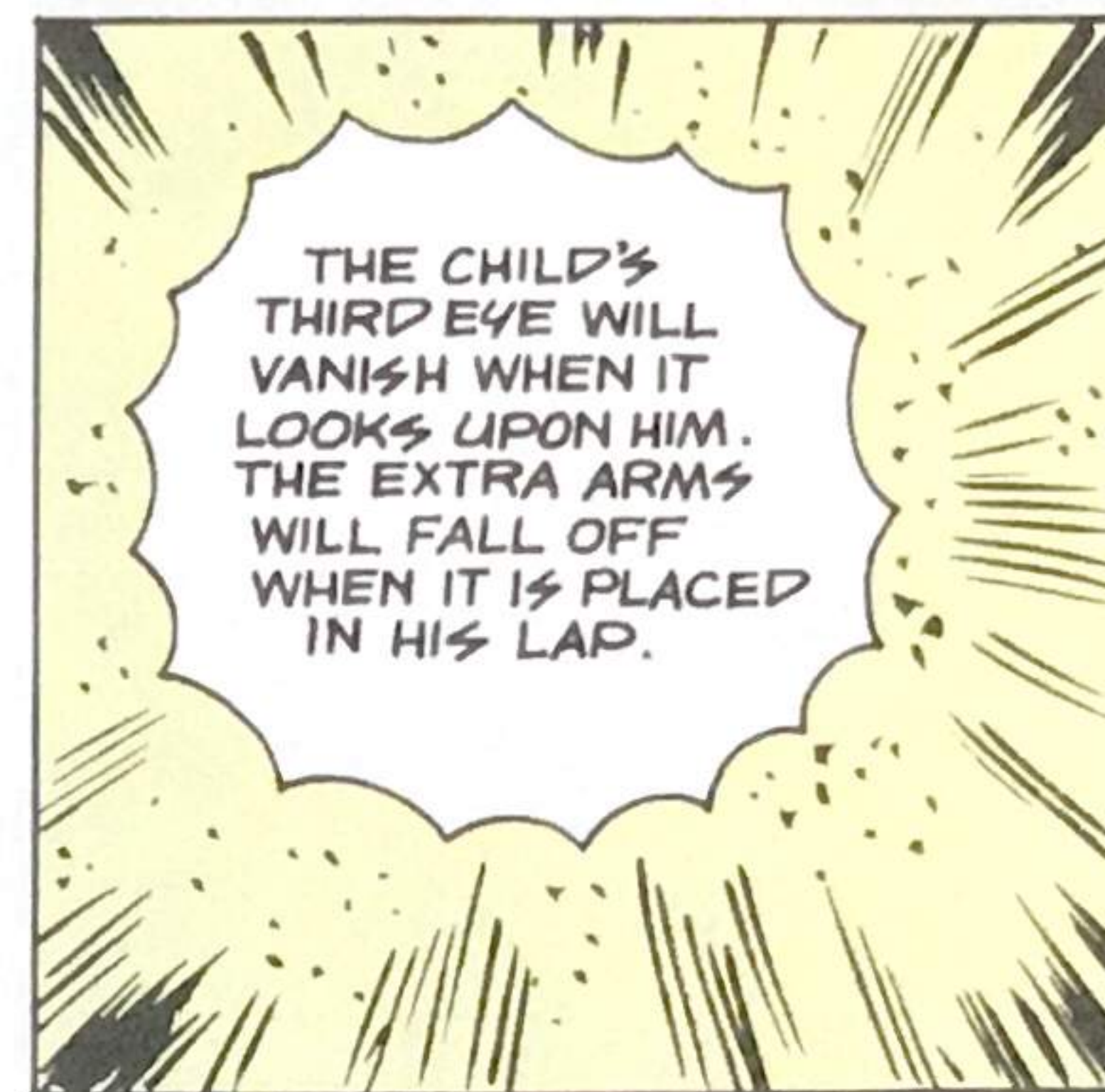
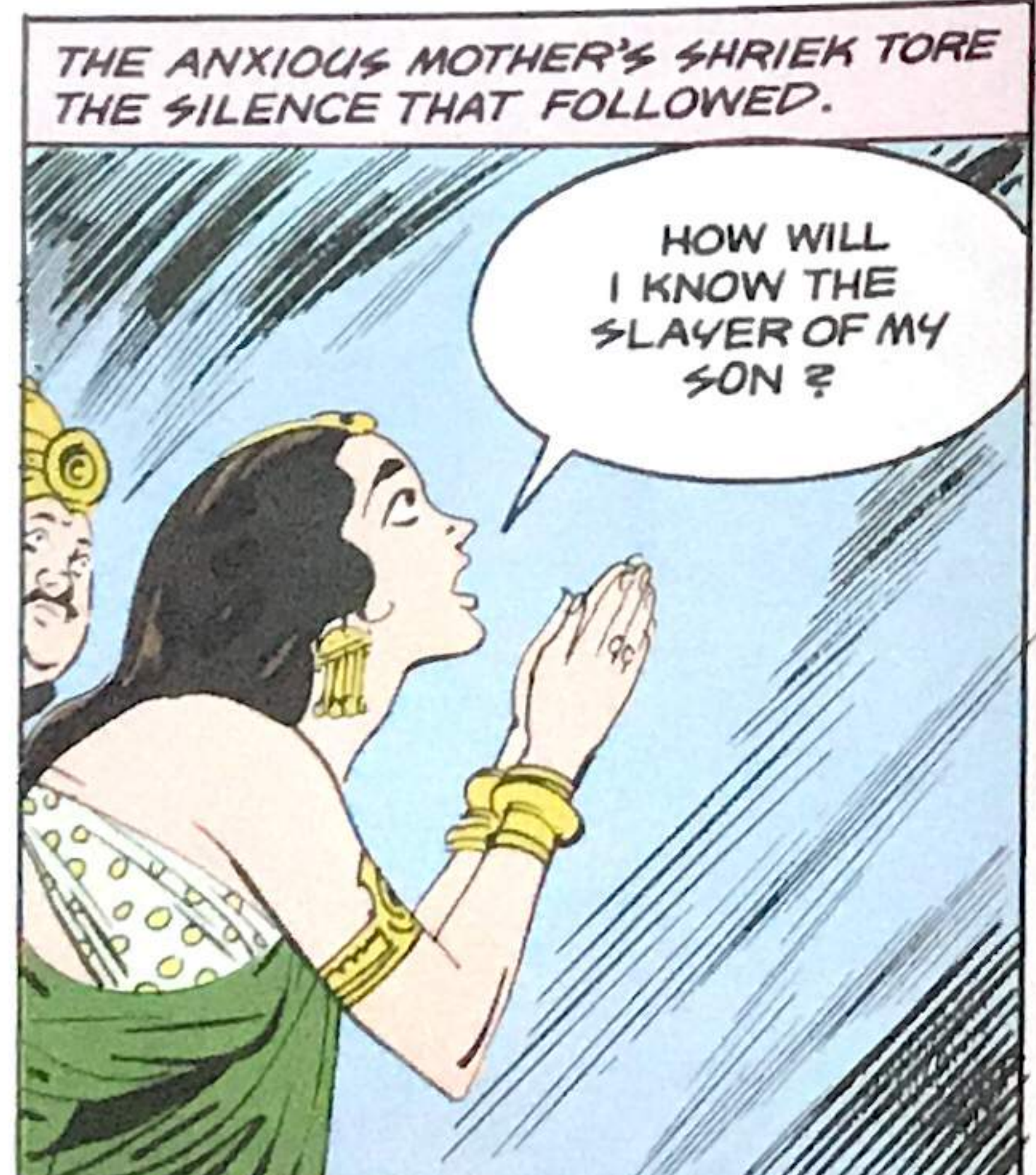
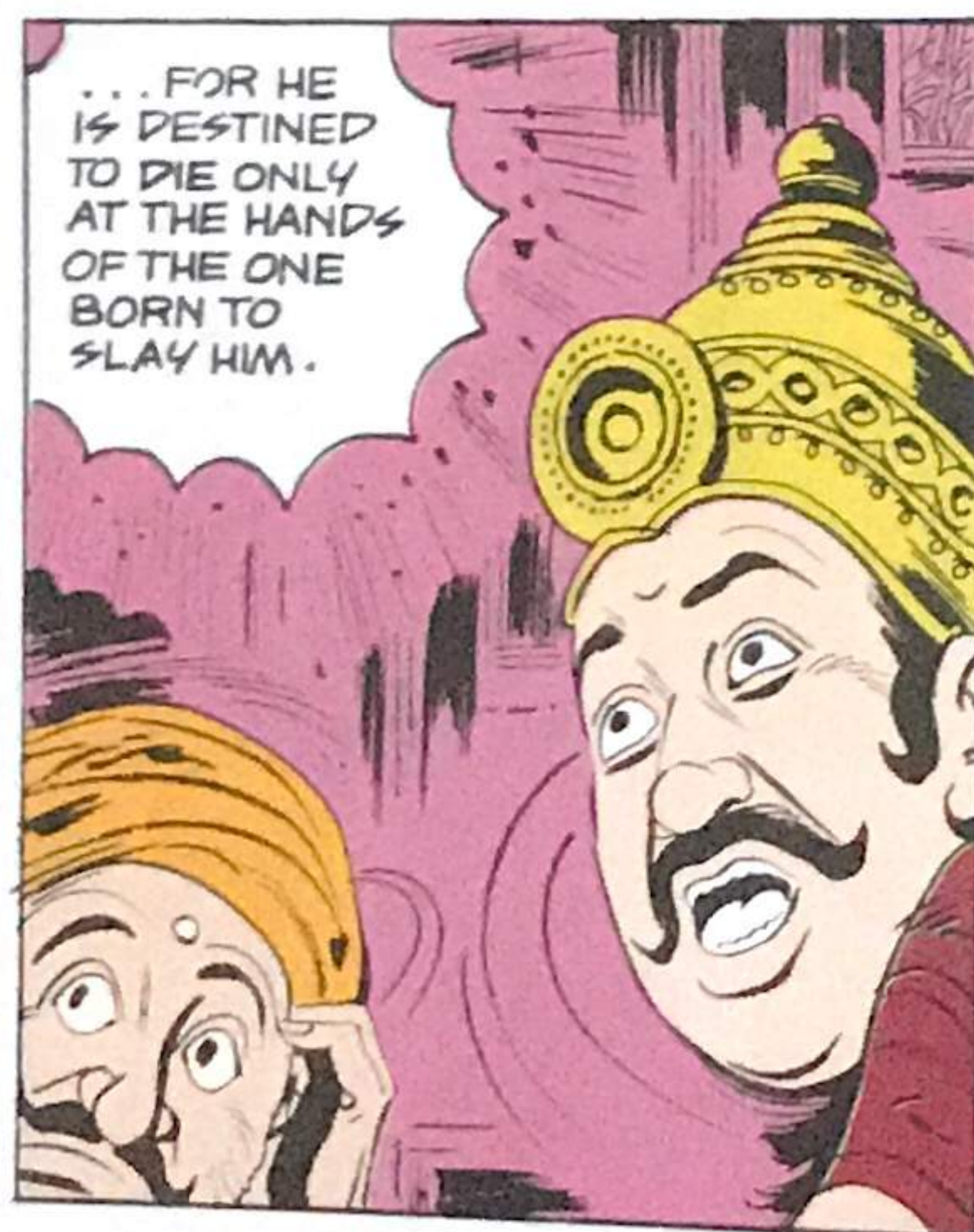
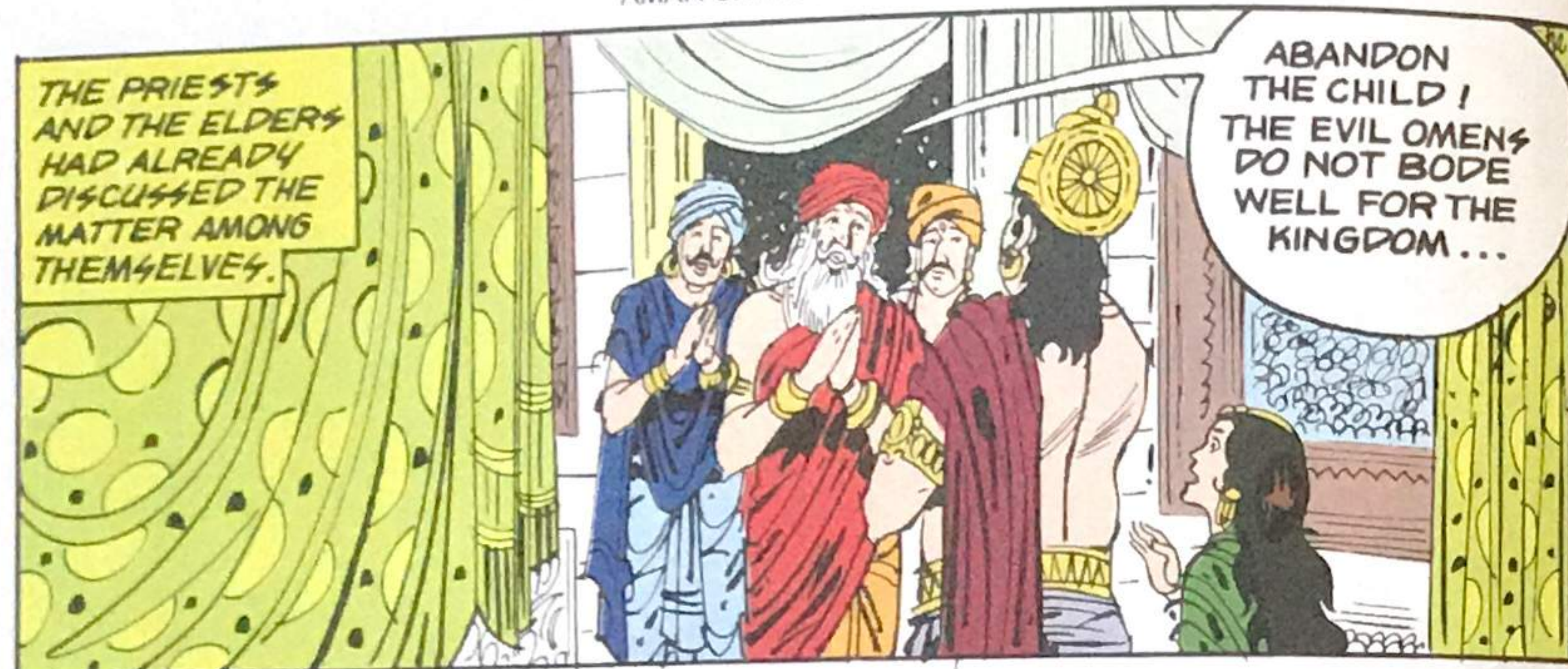
STOP HIM!
WHAT HAVE WE
DONE TO DESERVE
THIS?

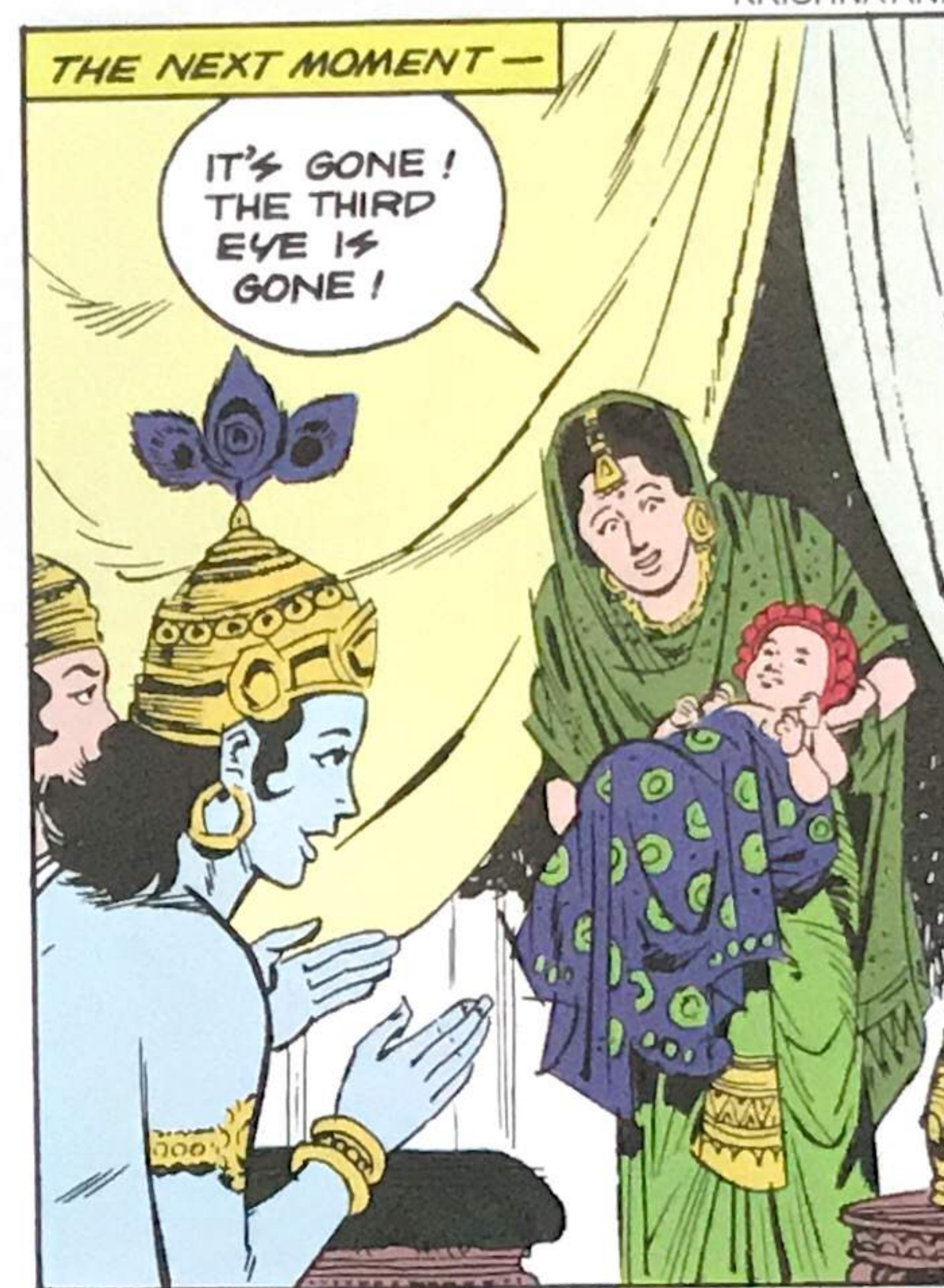
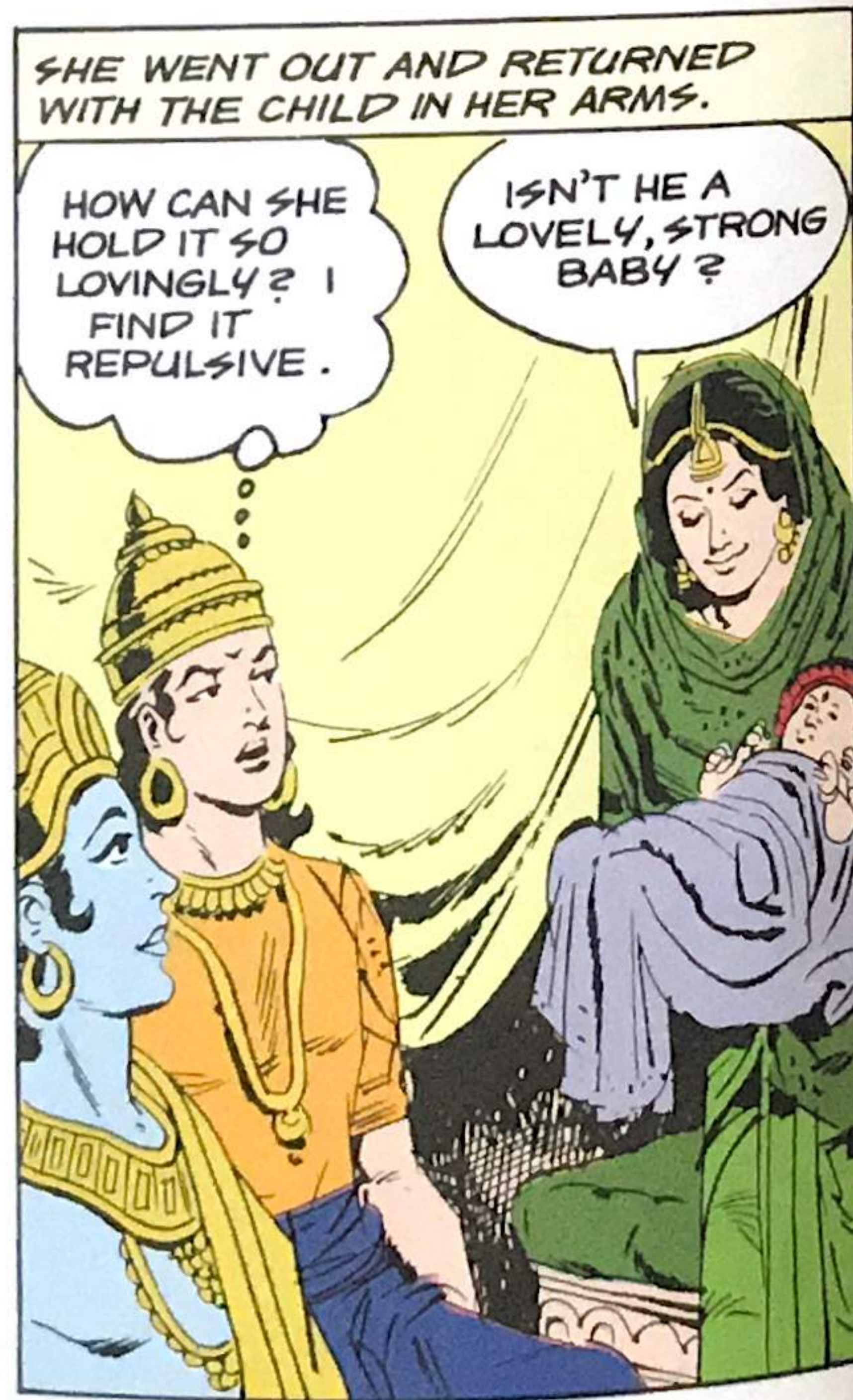
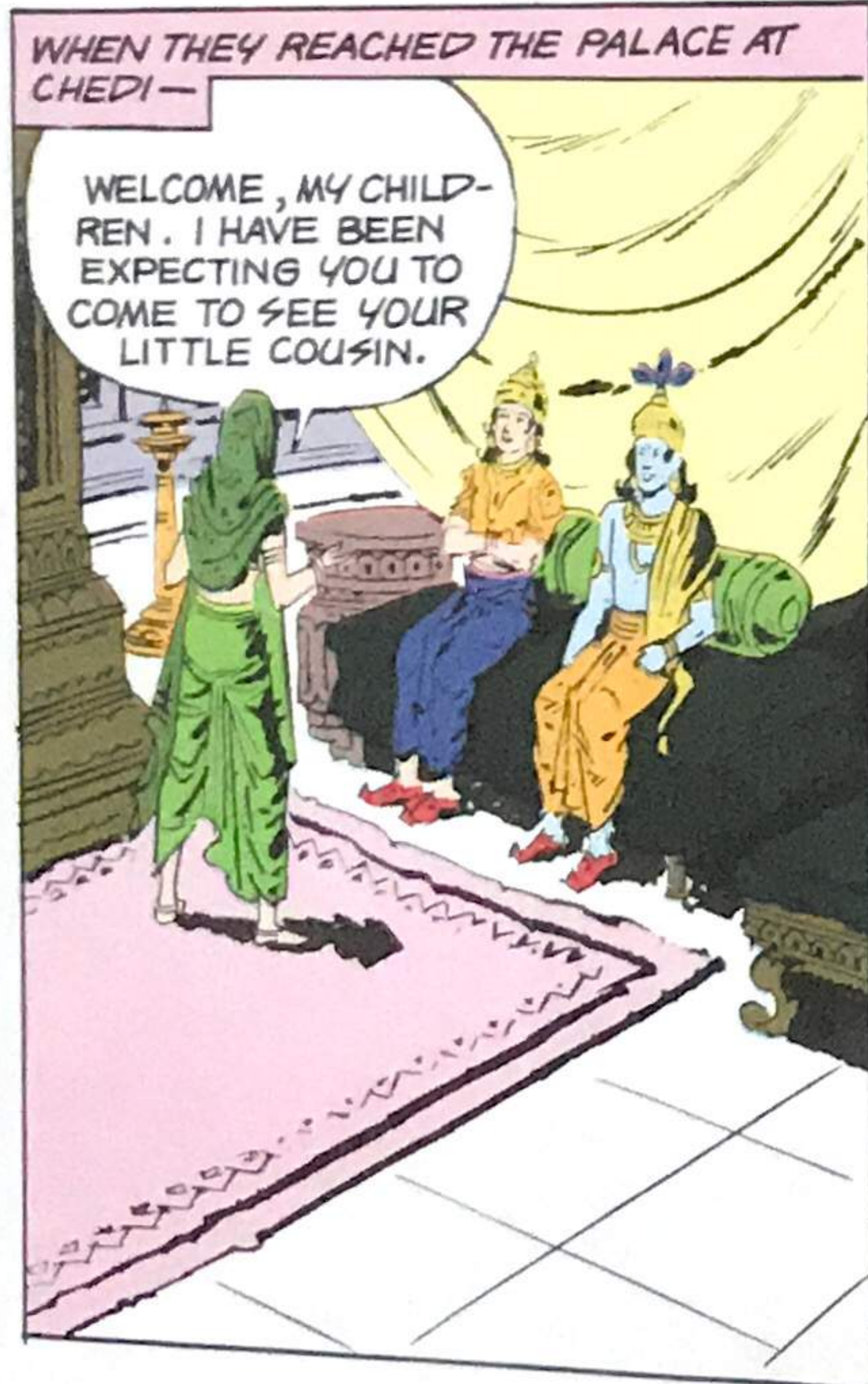


THE
EVIL OMENS
FRIGHTEN
ME.

AH! HERE
ARE THE PRIESTS
AND THE ELDERS!
THEY'LL TELL
US WHAT TO
DO.









O KRISHNA,
I AM AFRAID!
TERRIBLY
AFRAID.



WILL YOU
GRANT ME
A BOON? YOU
MUST NOT
REFUSE!

I'LL TRY
TO BRING YOU
WHAT COMFORT
I CAN.



PROMISE ME
THAT YOU WILL
PARDON, FOR
MY SAKE, ANY
OFFENCE GIVEN
BY THIS
CHILD.

FOR YOUR
SAKE, I WILL PAR-
DON HIS OFFENCES
A HUNDRED TIMES,
SO DON'T GRIEVE.



HE WILL PARDON
HIM A HUNDRED
TIMES! MY SON
IS SAFE!



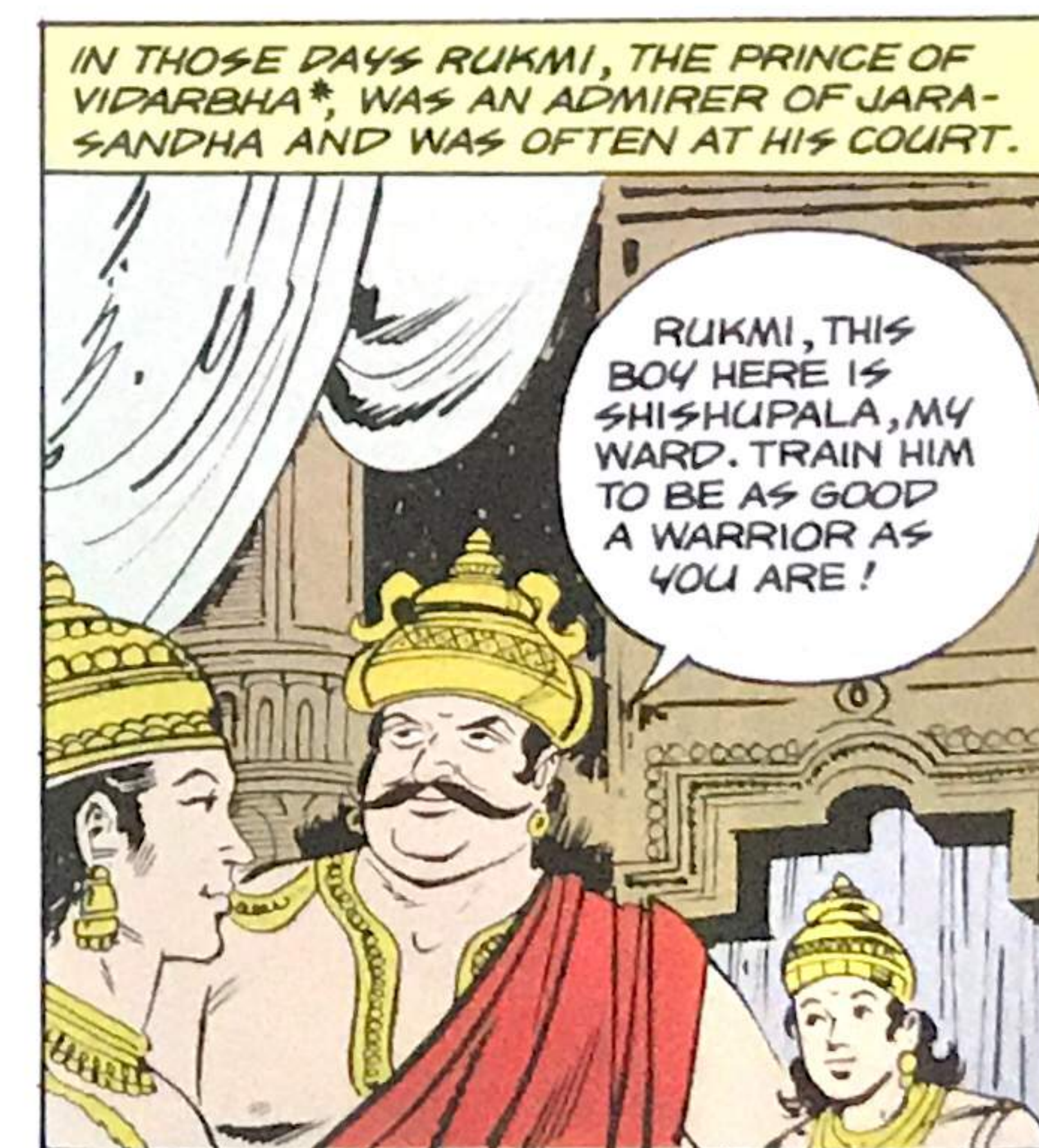
BUT DAMAGHOSHA WAS
NOT SO CERTAIN. LONG
AFTER KRISHNA AND
BALARAMA LEFT HE
WAS DEEP IN THOUGHT.

THE MIGHT OF KRISHNA
IS MATCHED BY NONE BUT
JARASANDHA, WHO IS NOW
KRISHNA'S SWORN ENEMY.
MY SON SHALL GROW UP
AT THE COURT OF
MAGADHA.



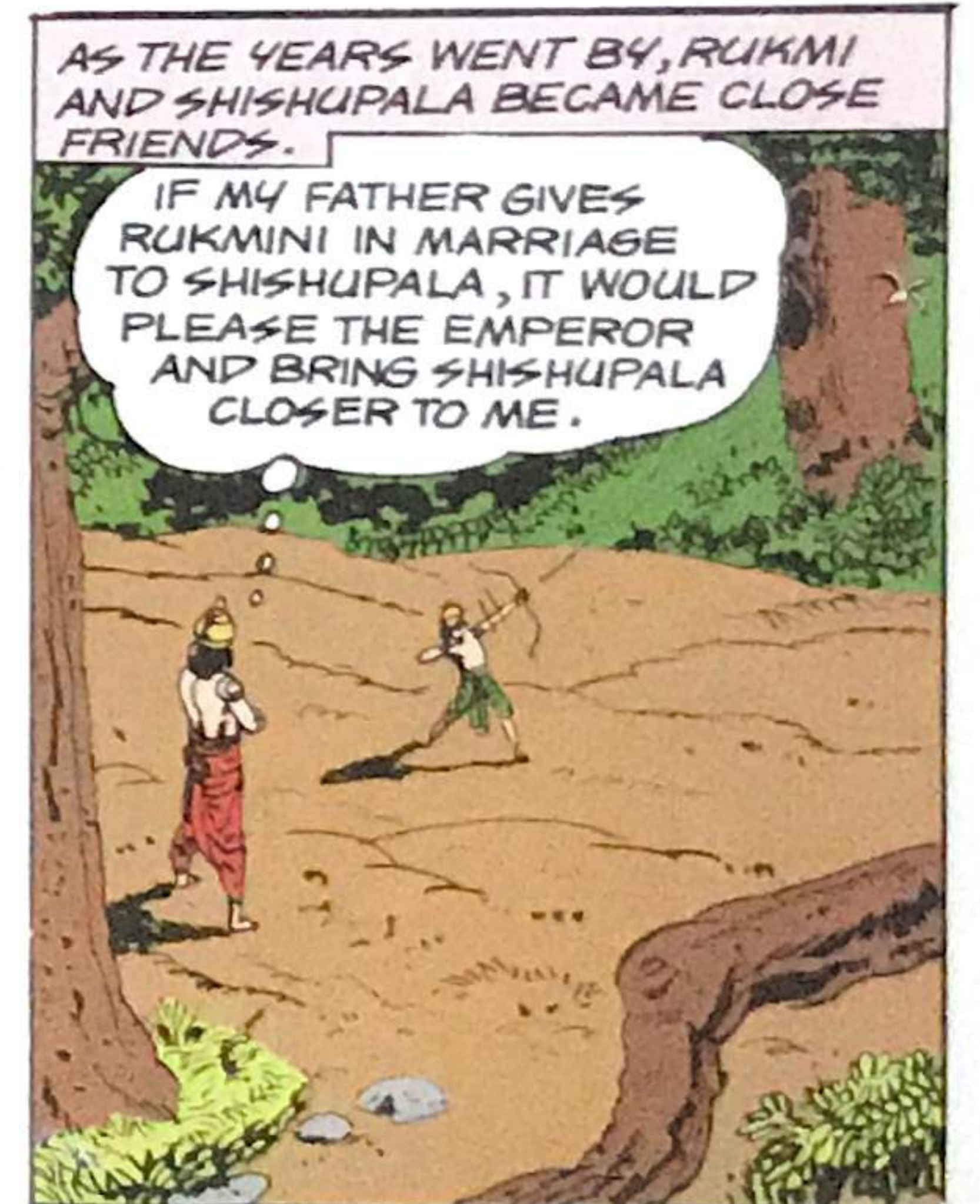
SO SHISHUPALA, AS
THE CHILD WAS NAMED,
WAS SENT TO MAGADHA.

A FINE
BOY INDEED!
I SHALL MAKE
YOU A LION
AMONG MEN.



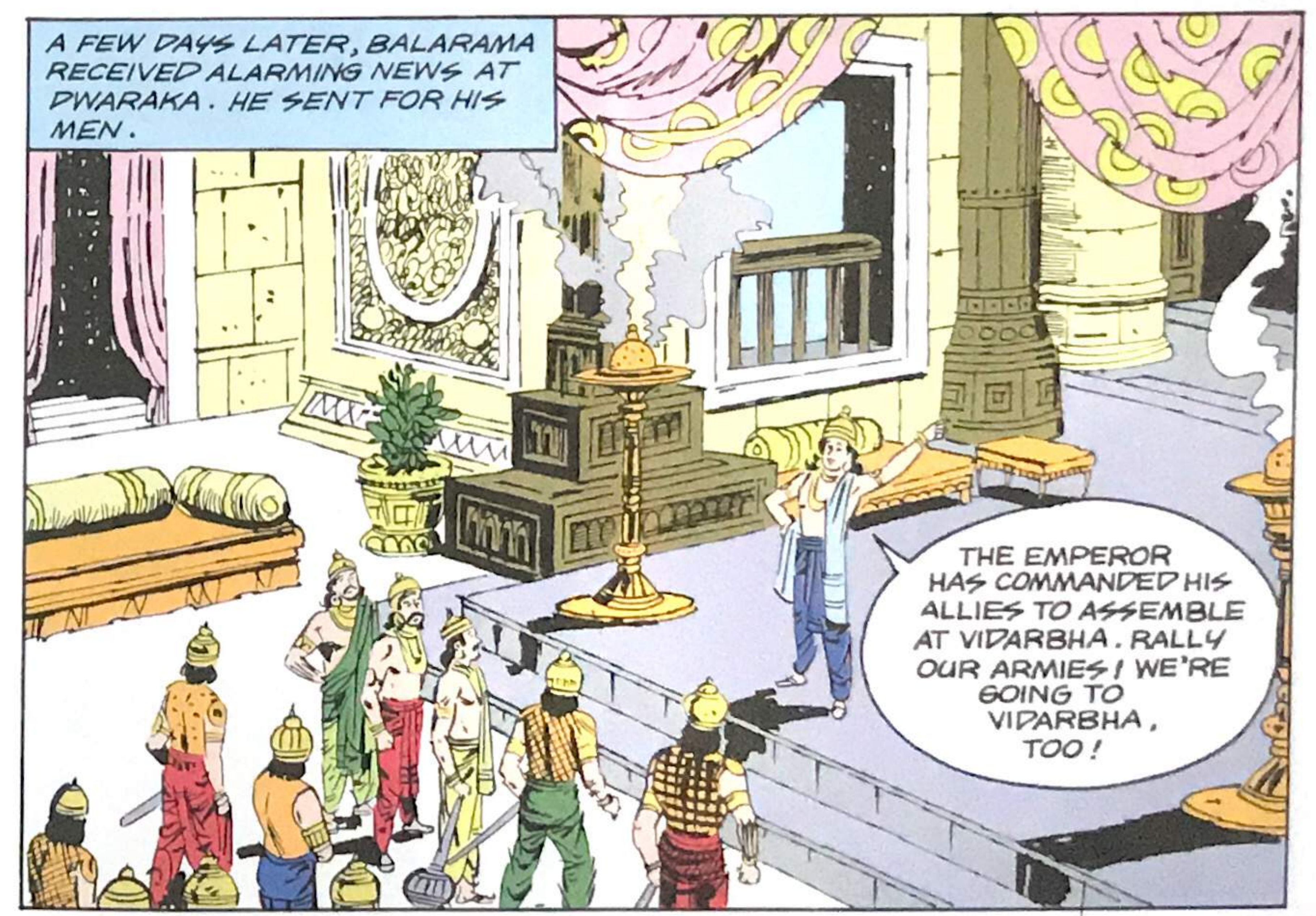
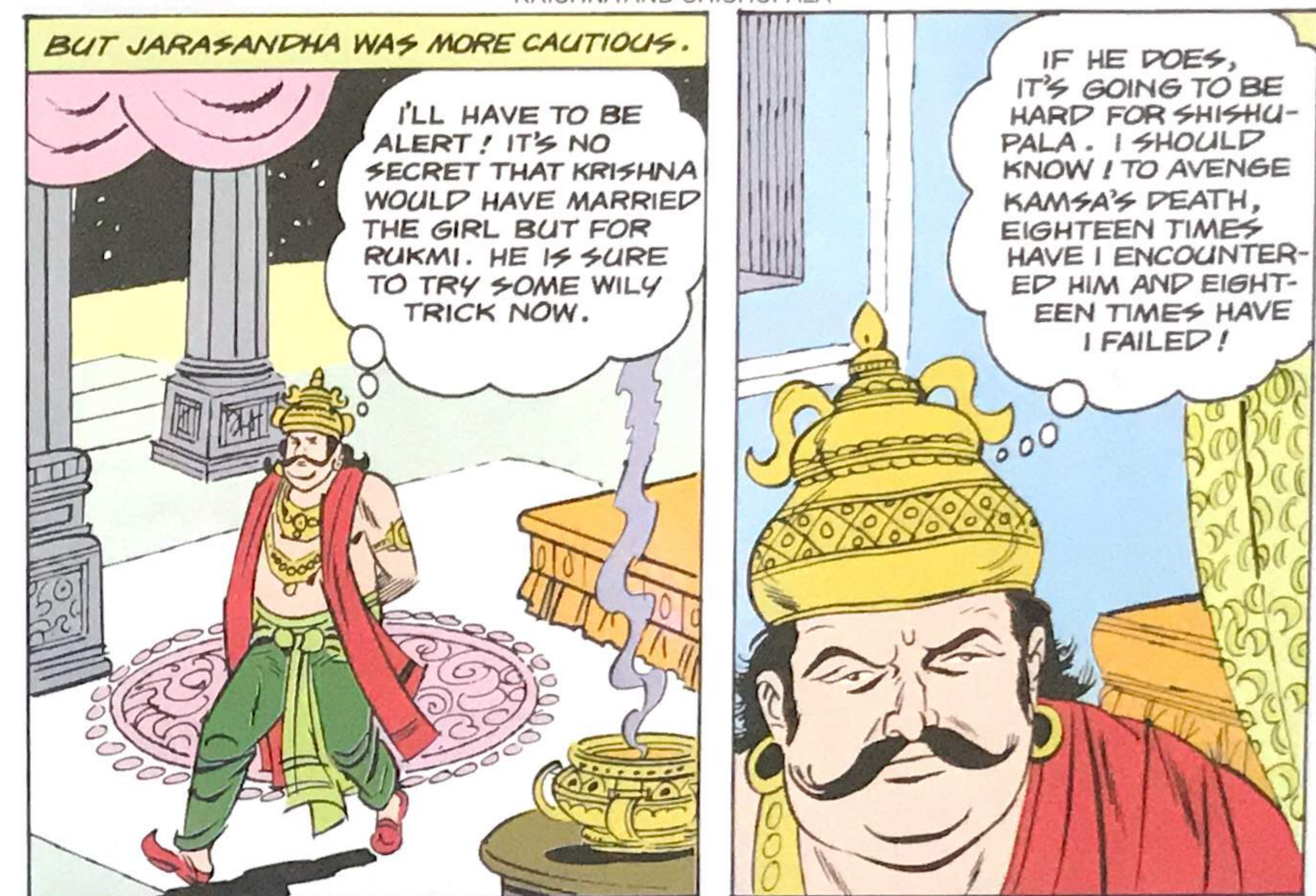
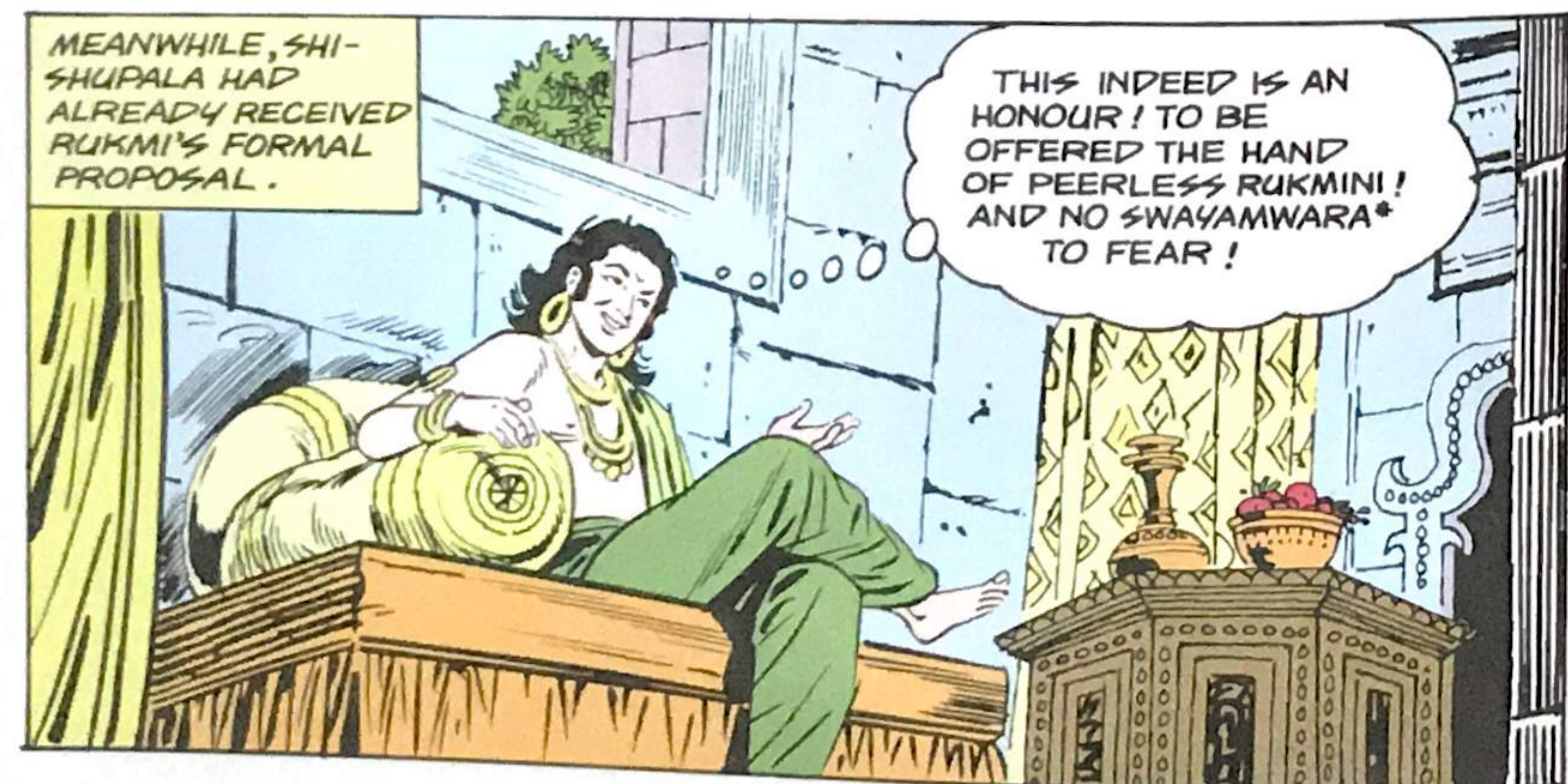
IN THOSE DAYS RUKMI, THE PRINCE OF
VIDARBHA*, WAS AN ADMIRER OF JARA-
SANDHA AND WAS OFTEN AT HIS COURT.

RUKMI, THIS
BOY HERE IS
SHISHUPALA, MY
WARD. TRAIN HIM
TO BE AS GOOD
A WARRIOR AS
YOU ARE!



AS THE YEARS WENT BY, RUKMI
AND SHISHUPALA BECAME CLOSE
FRIENDS.

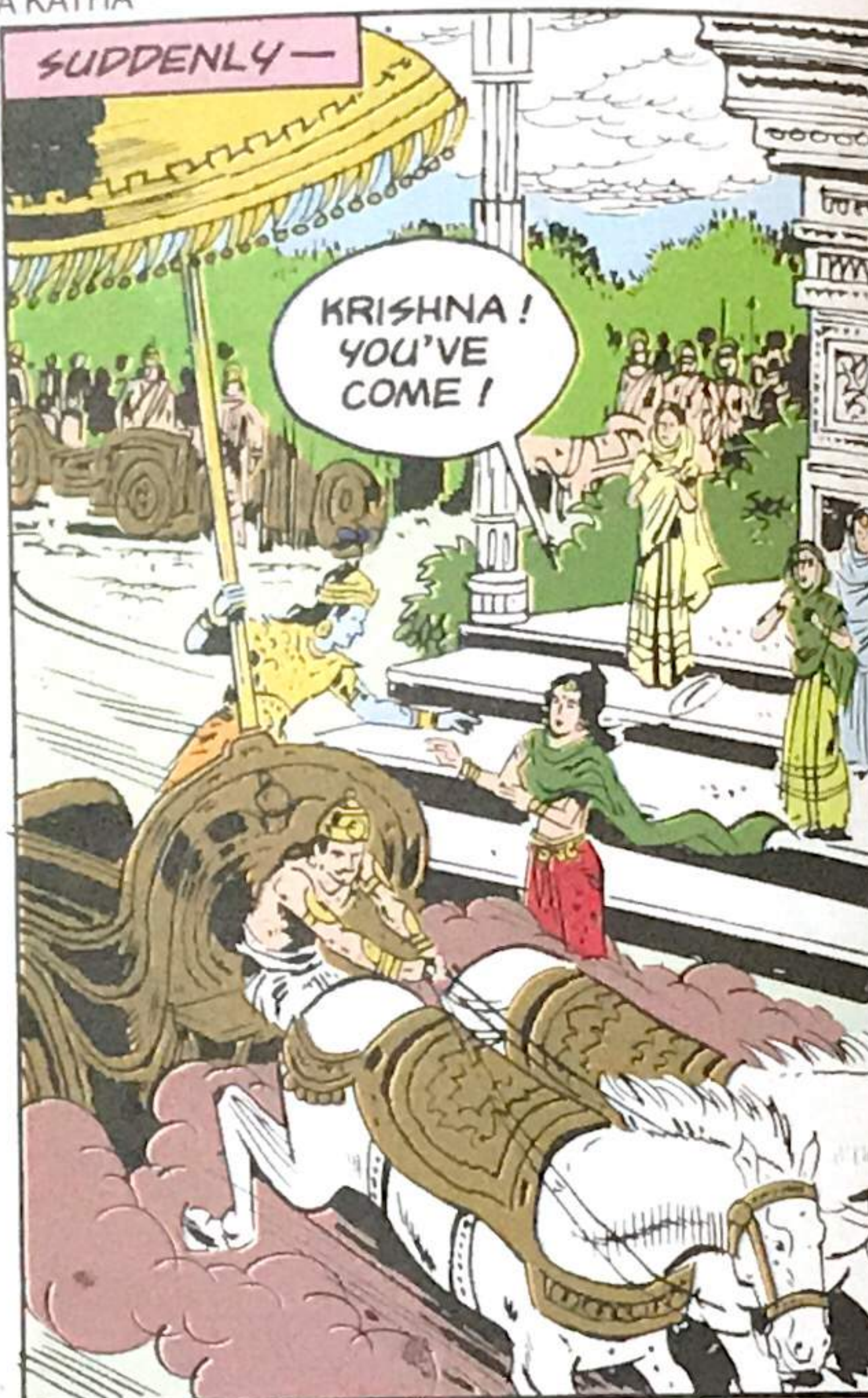
IF MY FATHER GIVES
RUKMINI IN MARRIAGE
TO SHISHUPALA, IT WOULD
PLEASE THE EMPEROR
AND BRING SHISHUPALA
CLOSER TO ME.



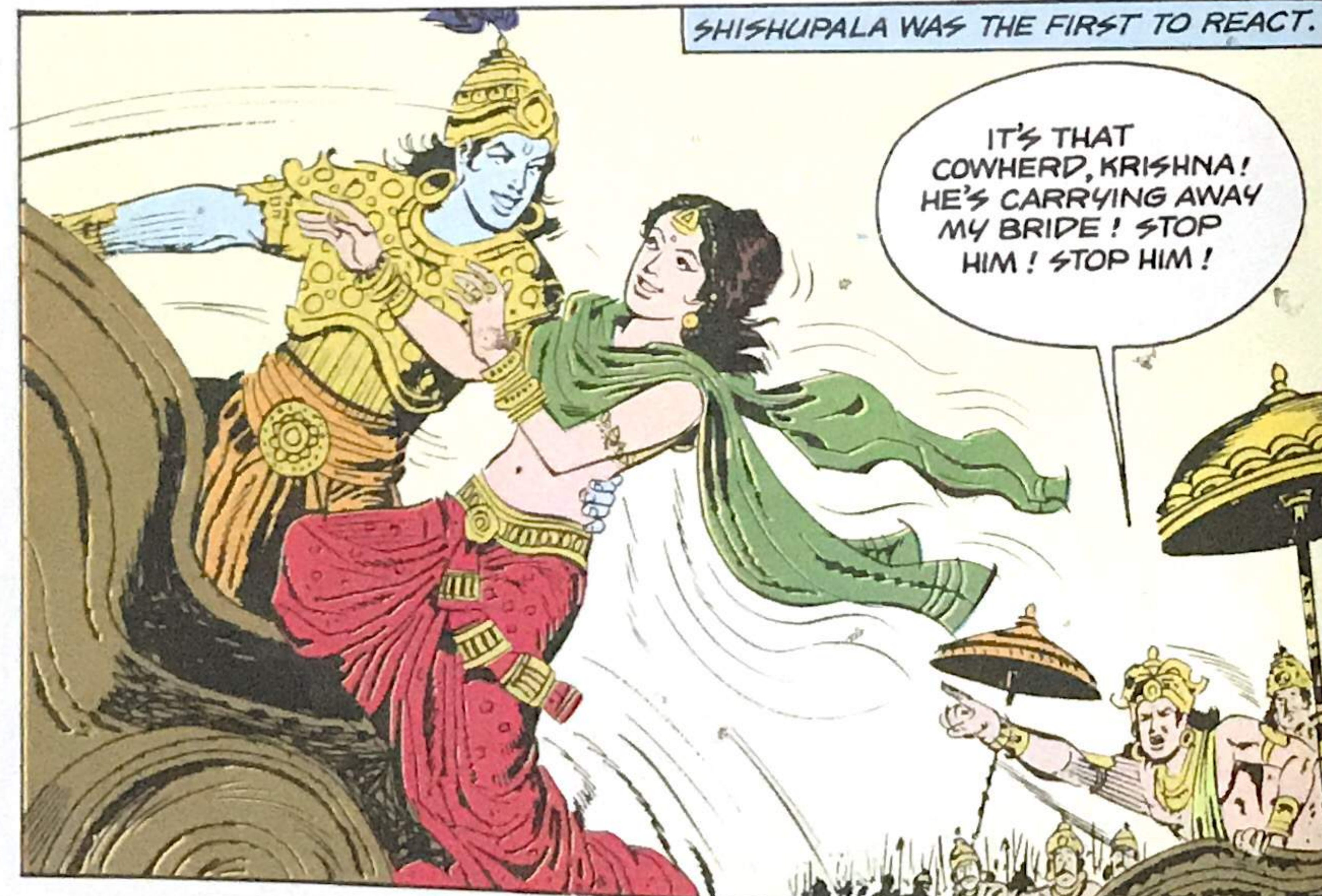
THE DAY OF THE WEDDING DAWNED. THE ASSEMBLY OF KINGS WAITED OUTSIDE THE TEMPLE WHERE RUKMINI HAD GONE TO PRAY BEFORE THE CEREMONY.



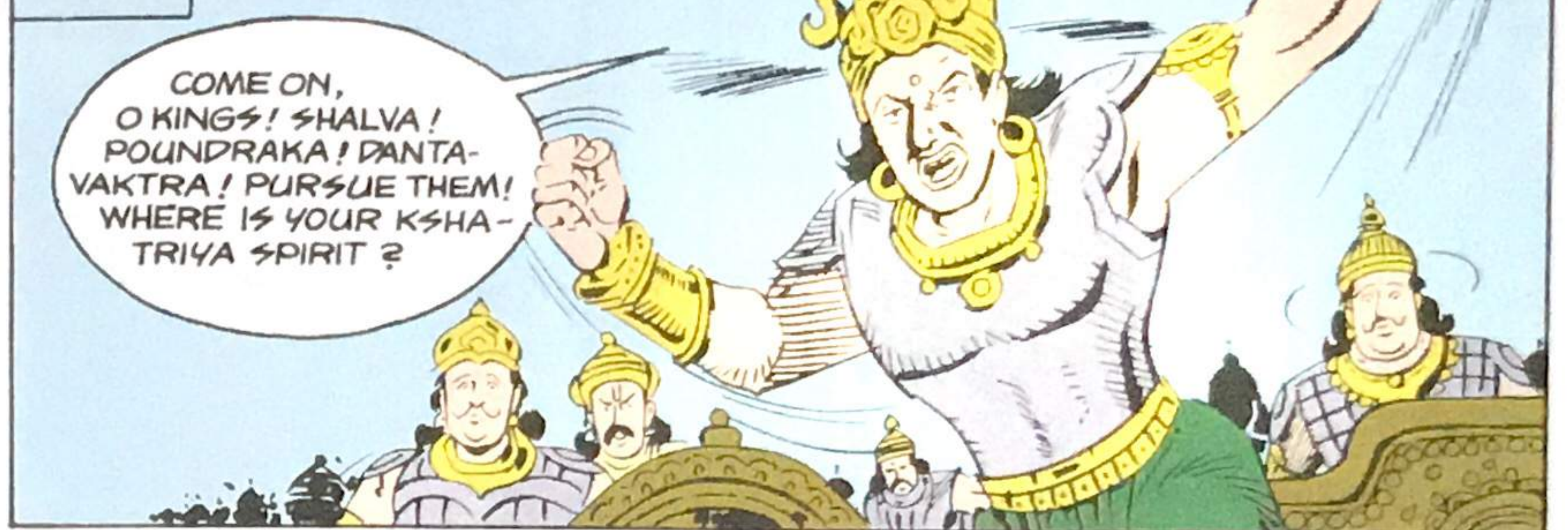
SUDDENLY —



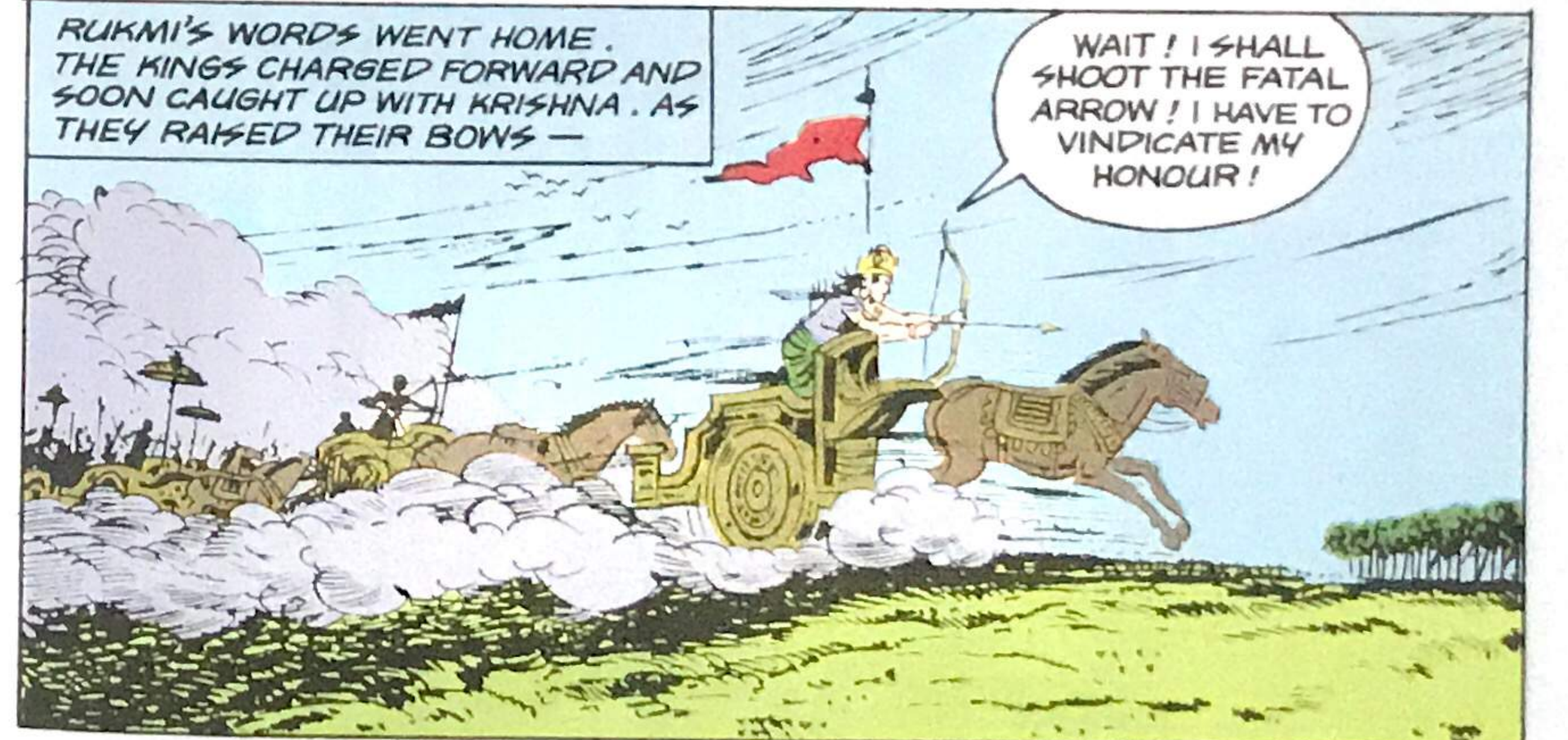
SHISHUPALA WAS THE FIRST TO REACT.

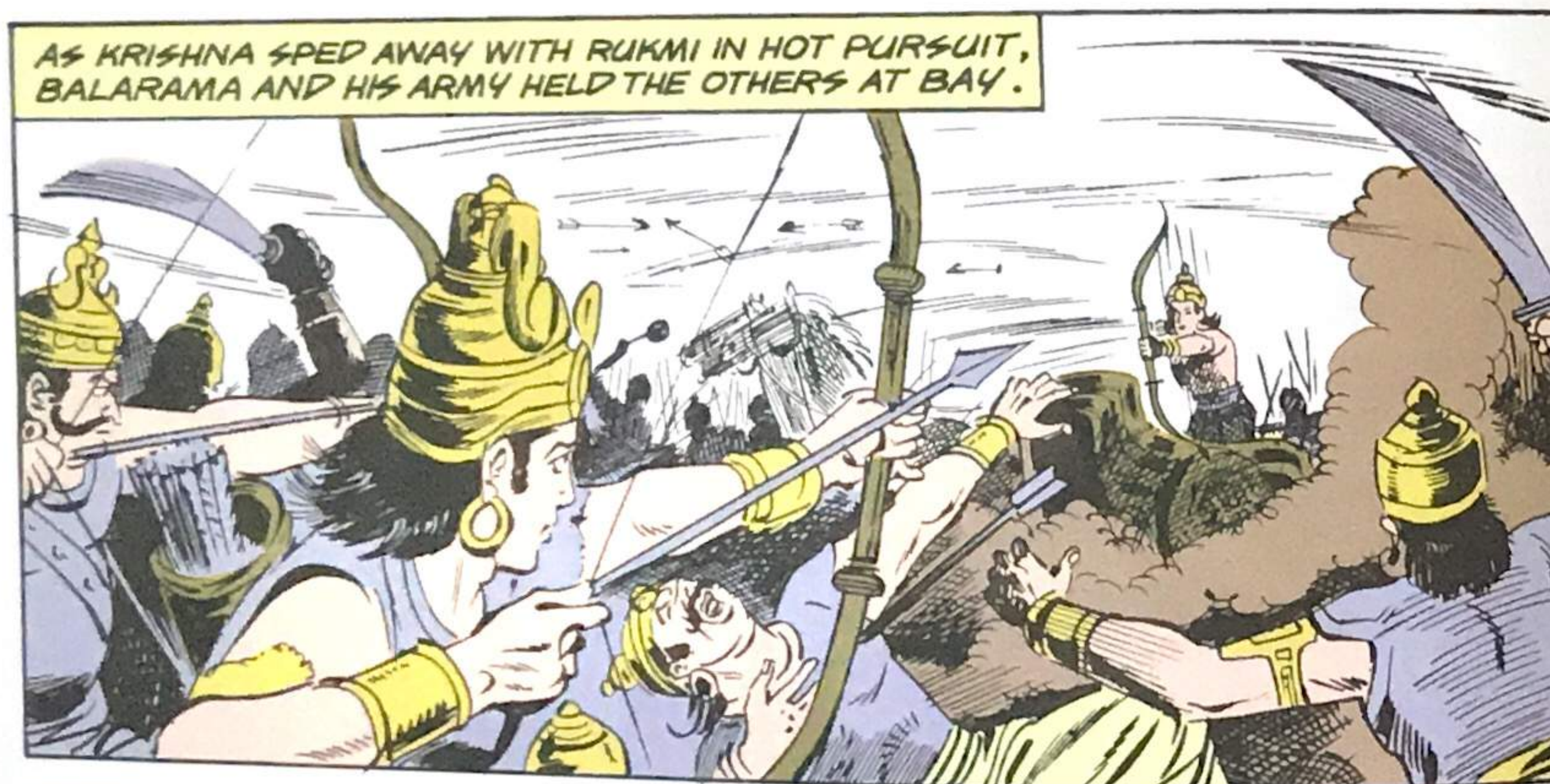
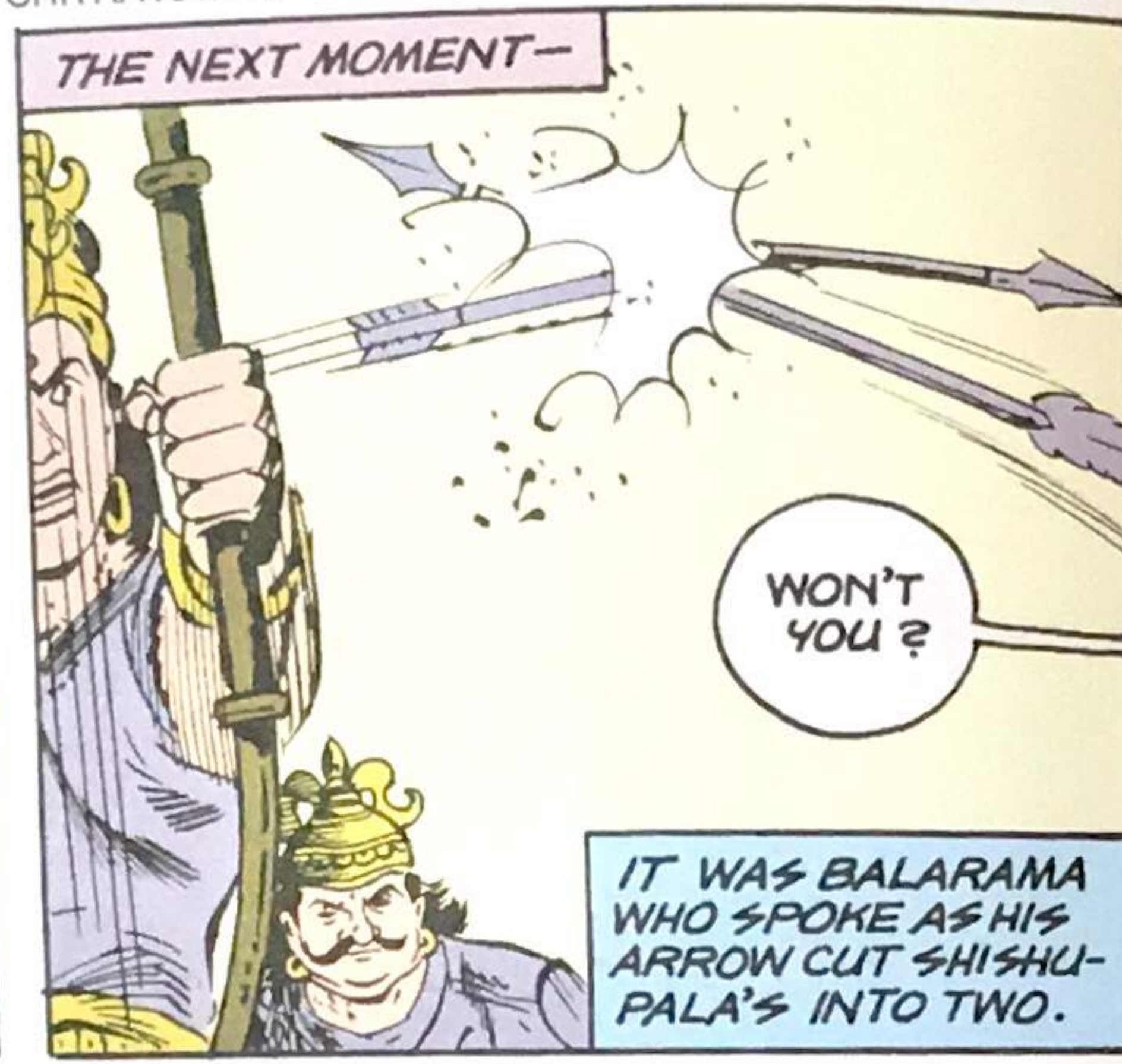
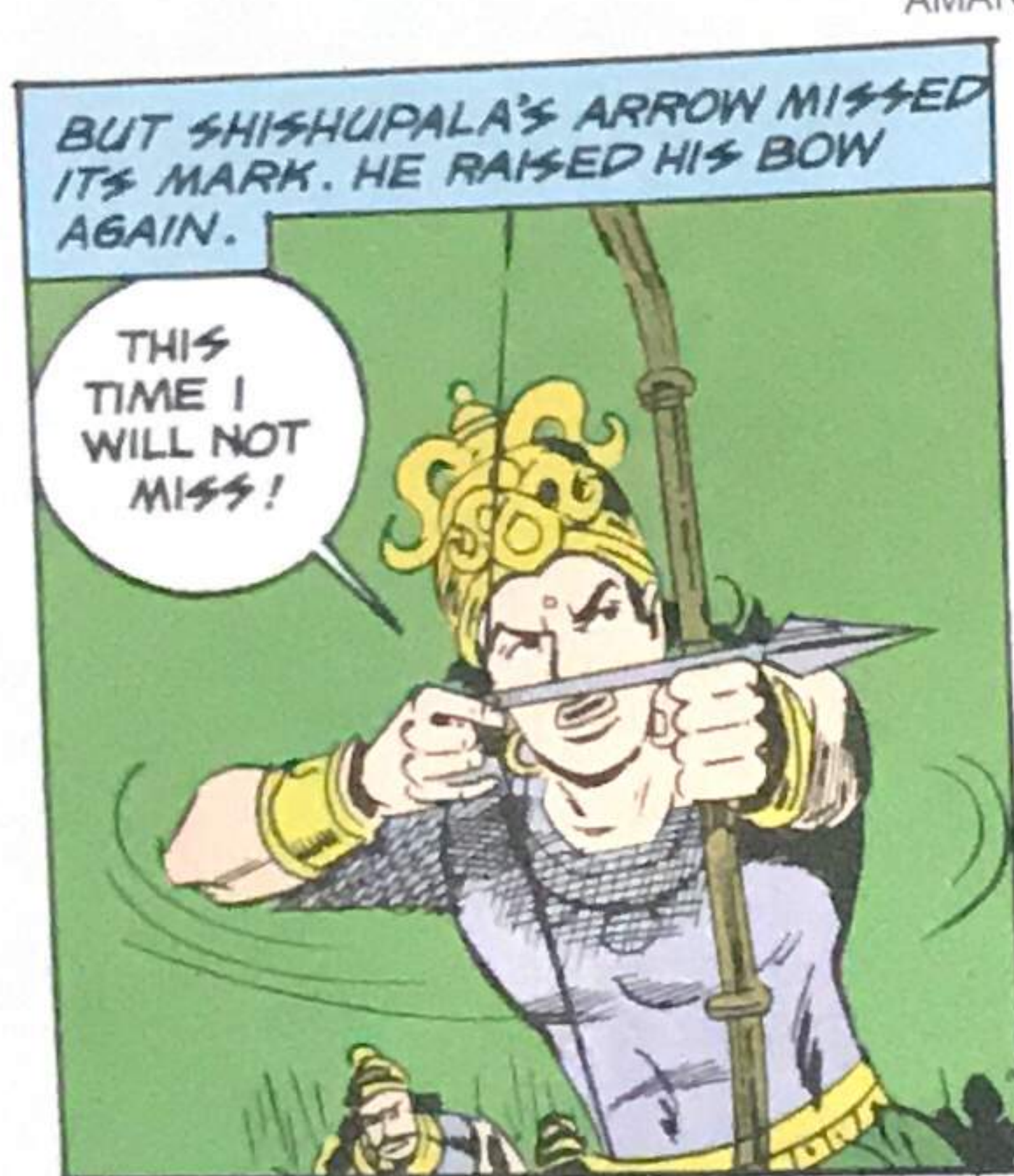


BUT SO BEMUSED WERE THE KINGS THAT THEY REMAINED ROOTED TO THE SPOT, GIVING KRISHNA A GOOD LEAD.



RUKMI'S WORDS WENT HOME. THE KINGS CHARGED FORWARD AND SOON CAUGHT UP WITH KRISHNA. AS THEY RAISED THEIR BOWS —





DANTAVAKTRA, ANOTHER VASSAL, SUPPORTED HIM.

AND HE'LL DO IT! COME, SHISHUPALA. DON'T GRIEVE.

TRYING TO CONSOLE THE DISTRAUGHT SUITOR AND BURNING WITH HATRED FOR HIS RIVAL ALL THE WHILE, THE VANQUISHED RETURNED TO THEIR CAPITALS.

AS HIS FATHER WAS NOW BEGINNING TO AGE, SHISHUPALA RETURNED TO CHEDI. WHEN HE ENTERED THE CAPITAL —

I HAD HOPED TO RETURN WITH A CHERISHED BRIDE BUT ALL I HAVE BROUGHT HOME IS HUMILIATION.

UNDER JARASANDHA'S PROTECTION, IN THE YEARS THAT FOLLOWED, SHISHUPALA OFTEN DELIBERATELY COMMITTED OFFENCES AGAINST THE YADAVAS — BUT ESCAPED UNPUNISHED.

HERE IS THAT RAT, SHISHUPALA! LET'S KILL HIM.

LET HIM GO, BALARAMA. REMEMBER MY PROMISE TO HIS MOTHER.

THEN ONE DAY, ONE OF SHISHUPALA'S SPIES CAME WITH NEWS.

EMPEROR JARASANDHA HAS BEEN SLAIN!

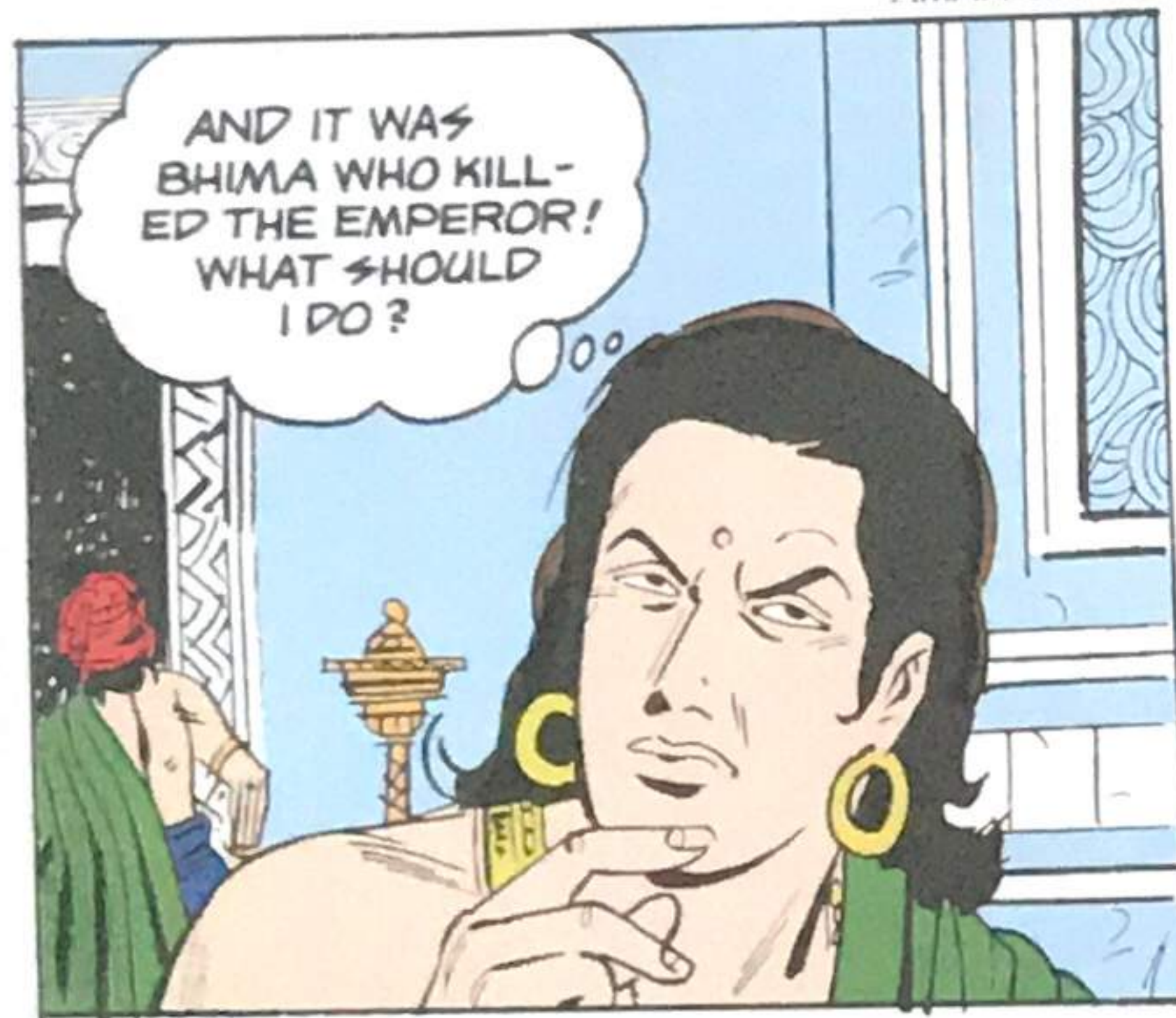
OH, NO! WHO WAS THE WICKED MURDERER? THAT MIGHTY WARRIOR COULD NOT HAVE BEEN SLAIN IN A FAIR FIGHT.

THOUGH IT WAS PLANNED BY KRISHNA AND THE PANDAVAS, THE ACTUAL KILLING WAS BHIMA'S WORK.

THE FOUL DEED WAS DONE BY A PANDAVA! MY MOTHER'S SISTER'S CHILD! BUT WHAT DID HE HAVE AGAINST THE EMPEROR?

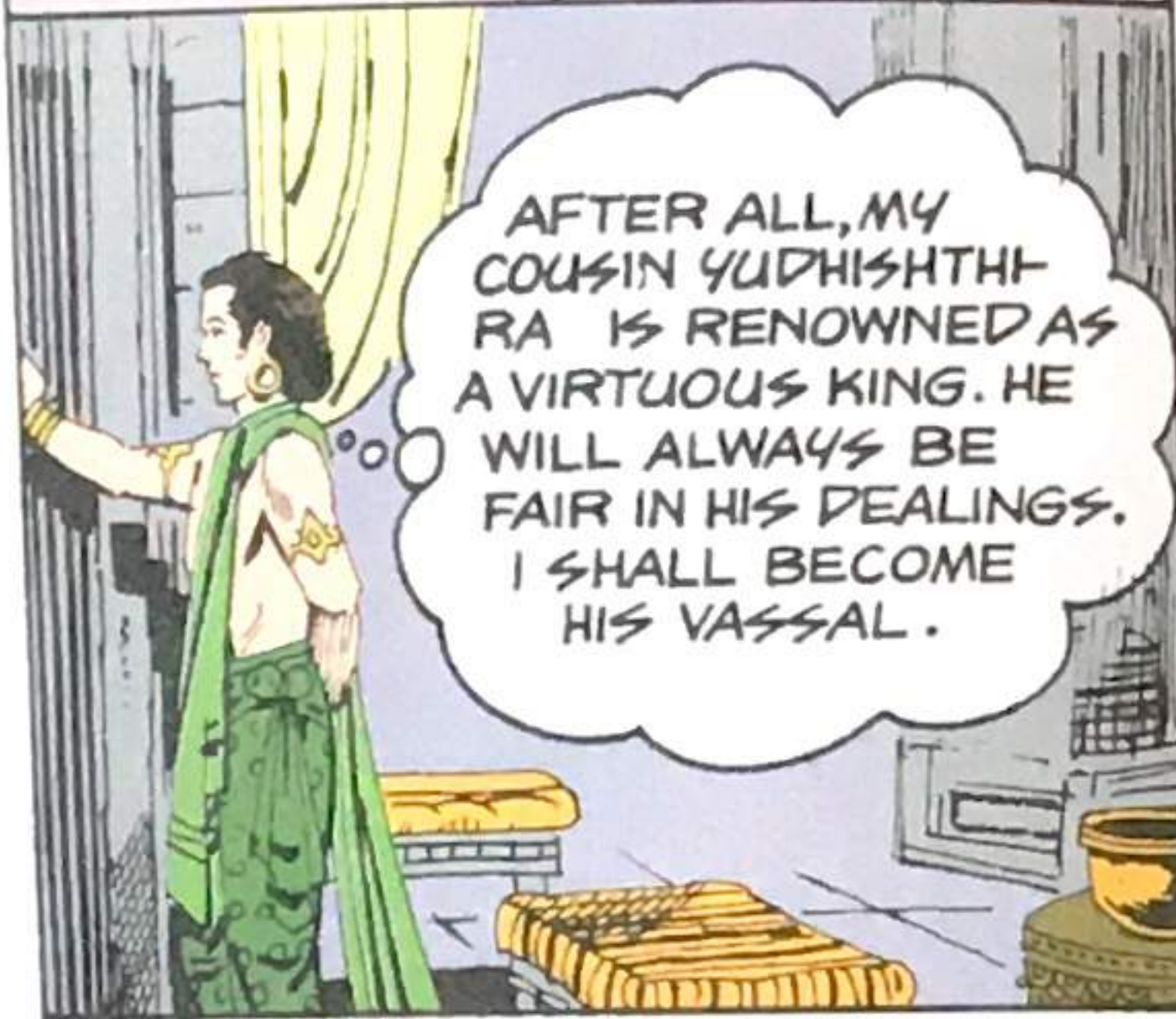
KING YUDHISHTHIRA WANTED TO PERFORM THE RAJASUYA SACRIFICE, FOR WHICH HE WOULD FIRST HAVE TO SECURE THE TITLE OF EMPEROR. JARASANDHA WAS THE ONLY OBSTACLE IN HIS PATH.

YUDHISHTHIRA'S FOUR BROTHERS, BHIMA, ARJUNA, NAKULA AND SAHADEVA, ARE NOW ON THEIR WAY TO THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH TO SUBDUCE THE KINGS. BHIMA WILL SOON BE COMING TO CHEDI.



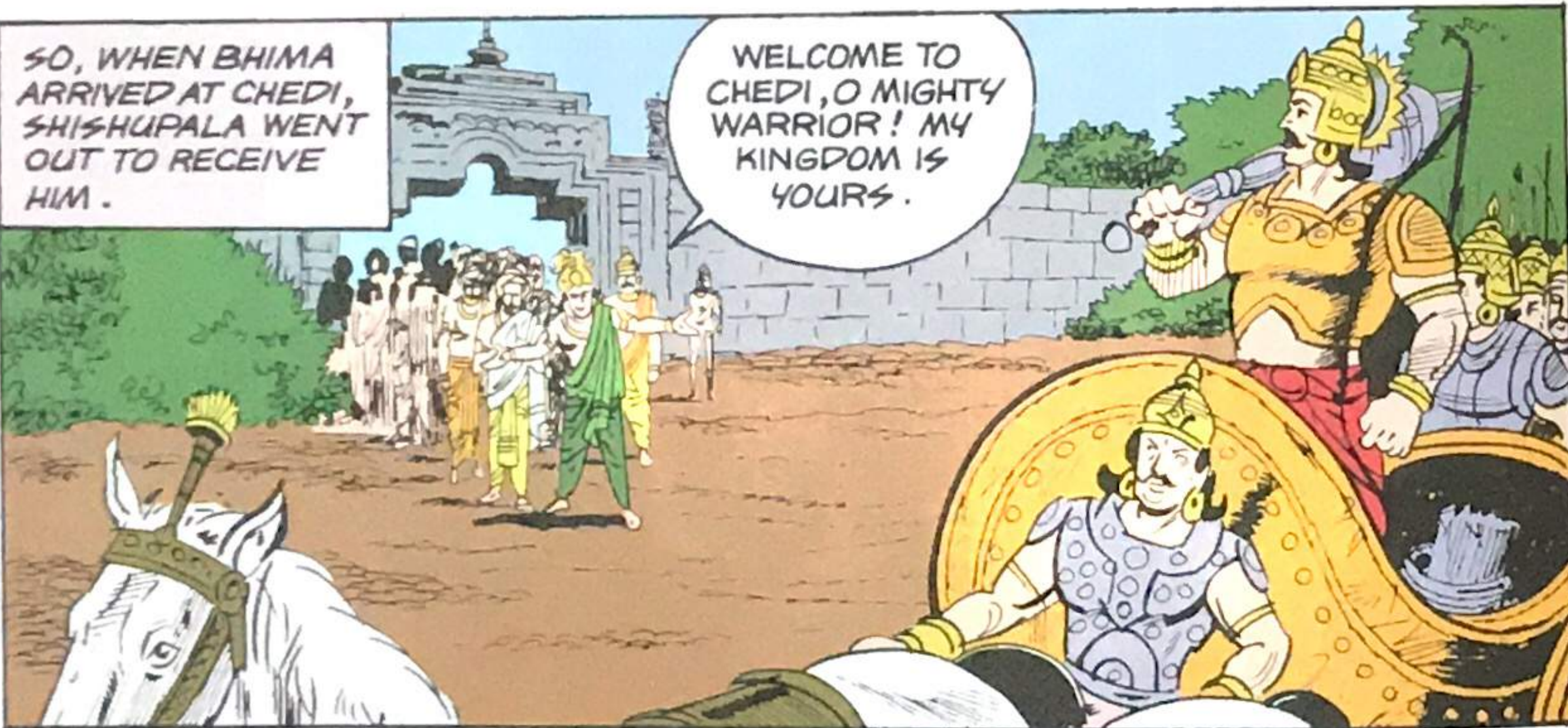
AND IT WAS BHIMA WHO KILLED THE EMPEROR! WHAT SHOULD I DO?

AFTER PONDERING OVER THE MATTER, SHISHUPALA MADE A DECISION.



AFTER ALL, MY COUSIN YUDHISHTHIRA IS RENOWNED AS A VIRTUOUS KING. HE WILL ALWAYS BE FAIR IN HIS DEALINGS. I SHALL BECOME HIS VASSAL.

SO, WHEN BHIMA ARRIVED AT CHEDI, SHISHUPALA WENT OUT TO RECEIVE HIM.

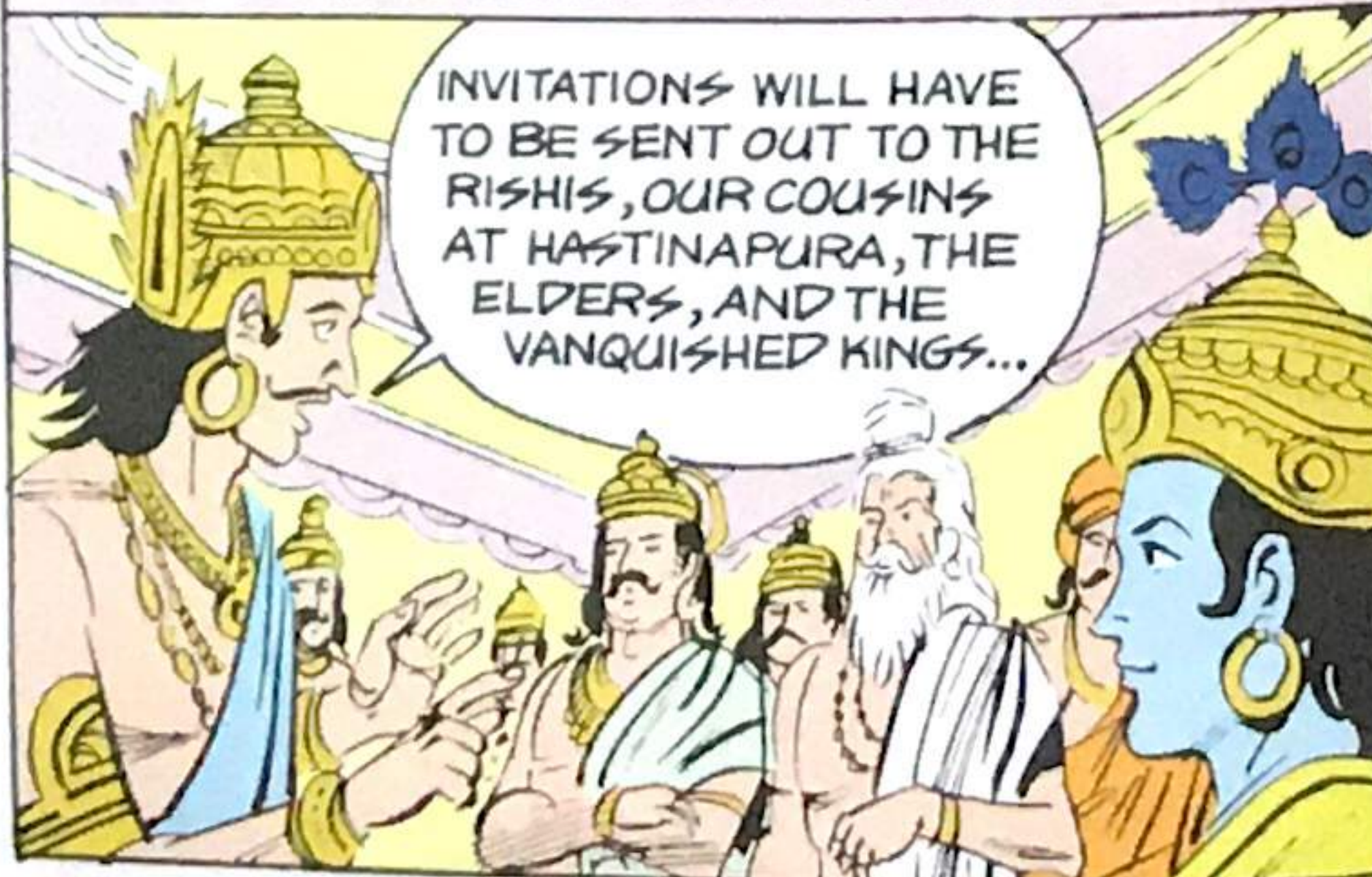


WELCOME TO CHEDI, O MIGHTY WARRIOR! MY KINGDOM IS YOURS.

SURPRISED AND DELIGHTED BY THE WARM RECEPTION WHERE HE HAD EXPECTED HOSTILITY, BHIMA STAYED ON AT CHEDI FOR A MONTH, ENJOYING SHISHUPALA'S HOSPITALITY.

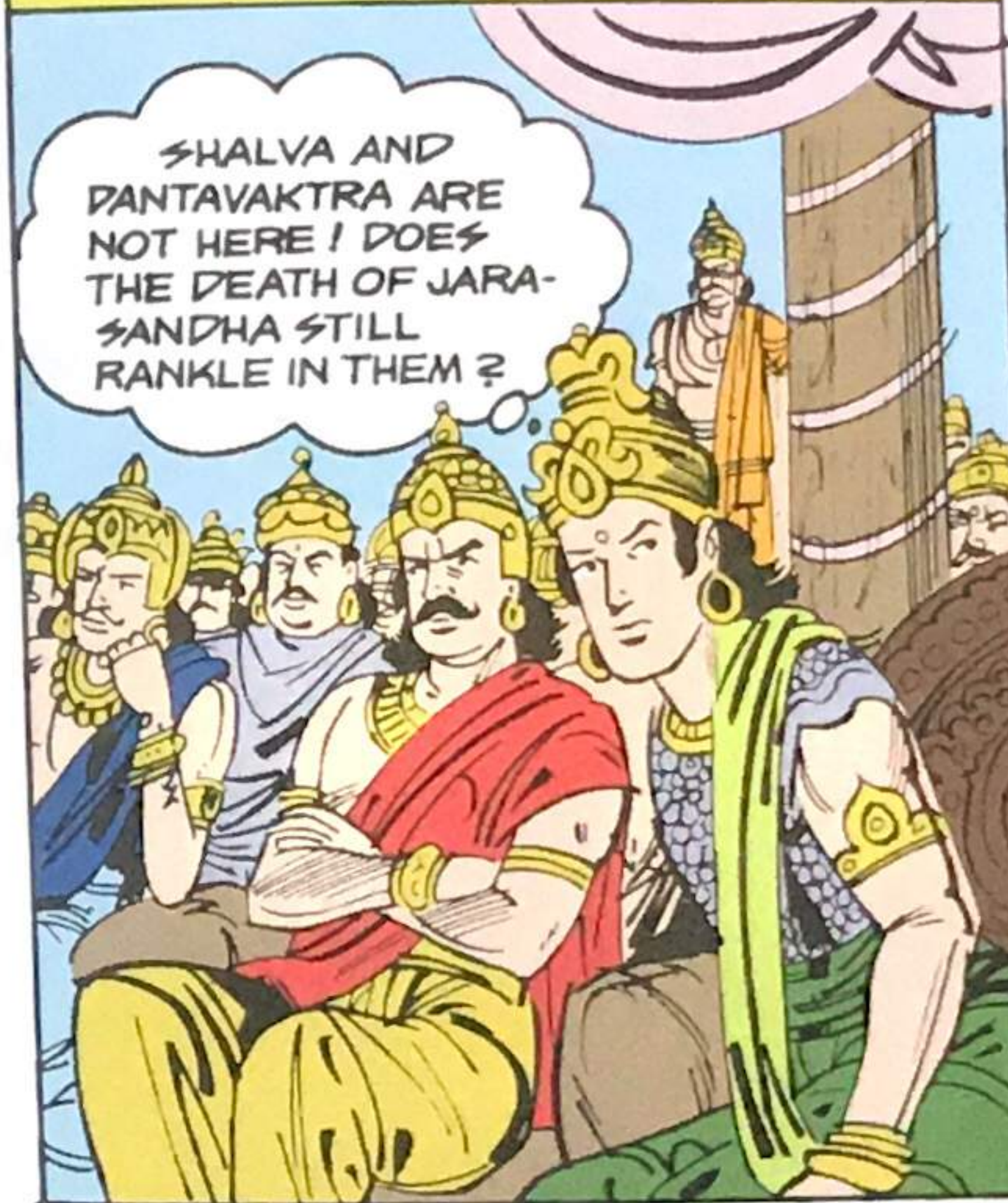


WHEN THE BROTHERS RETURNED HAVING BROUGHT ALL THE MAJOR KINGS UNDER HIS SWAY, SOME WILLINGLY, SOME BY FORCE, YUDHISHTHIRA SET A DATE FOR THE GRAND SACRIFICE IN CONSULTATION WITH KRISHNA AND THE ROYAL PRIESTS.



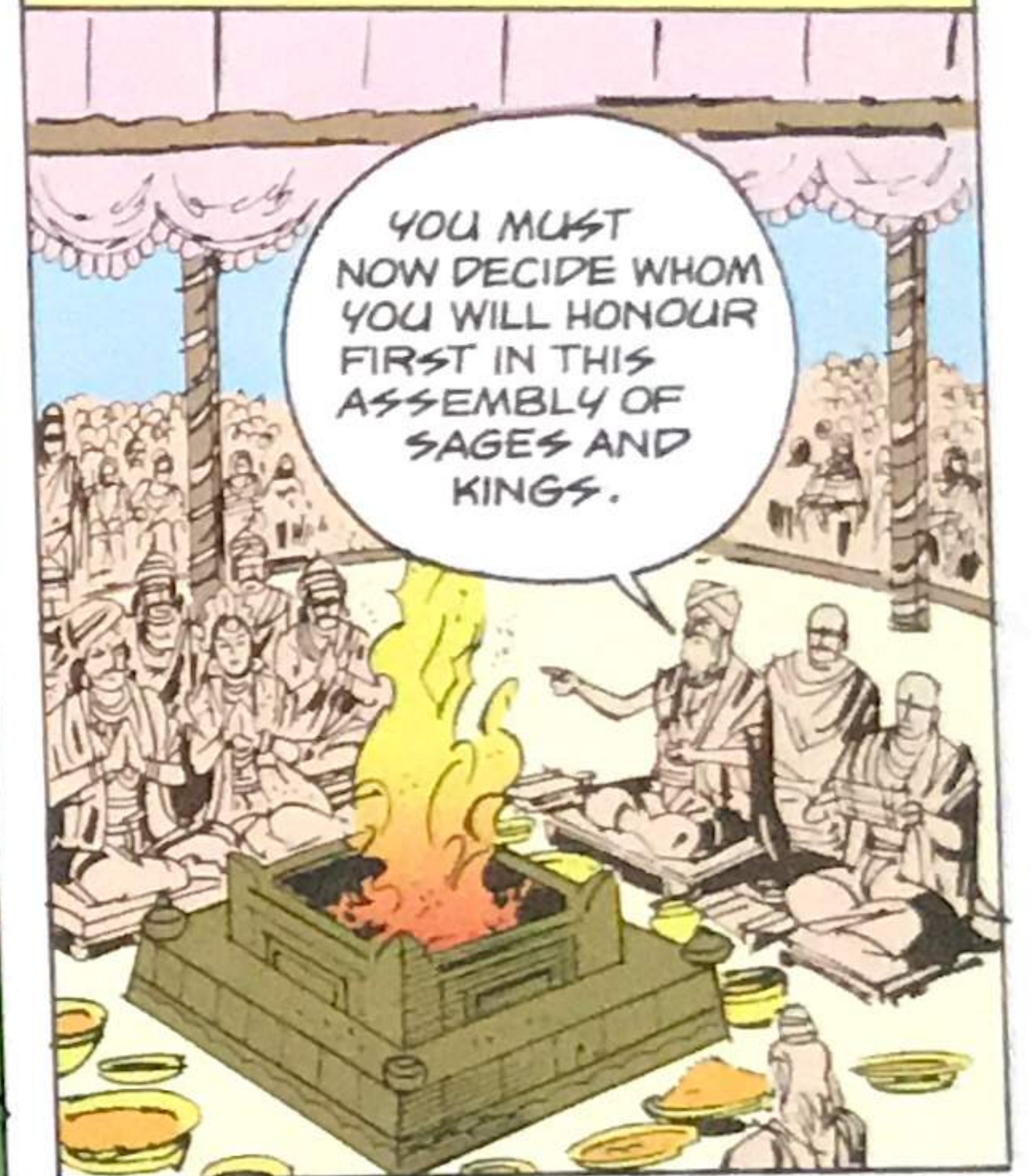
INVITATIONS WILL HAVE TO BE SENT OUT TO THE RISHIS, OUR COUSINS AT HASTINAPURA, THE ELDERS, AND THE VANQUISHED KINGS...

AT LAST THE GREAT DAY ARRIVED. THE SACRED RITUALS BEGAN. AS SHISHUPALA TOOK THE SEAT ASSIGNED TO HIM —



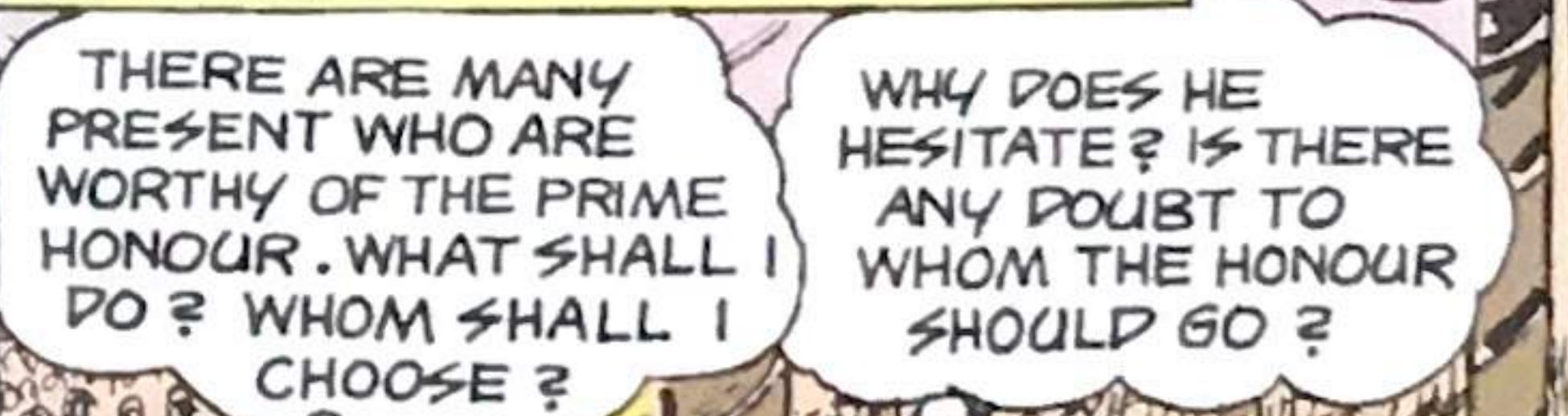
SHALVA AND PANTAVAKTRA ARE NOT HERE! DOES THE DEATH OF JARASANDHA STILL RANKLE IN THEM?

THE OFFICIATING PRIESTS GUIDED YUDHISHTHIRA THROUGH THE CEREMONIES TO THE FINAL DAY WHEN THE SOMA JUICE WAS EXTRACTED.



YOU MUST NOW DECIDE WHOM YOU WILL HONOUR FIRST IN THIS ASSEMBLY OF SAGES AND KINGS.

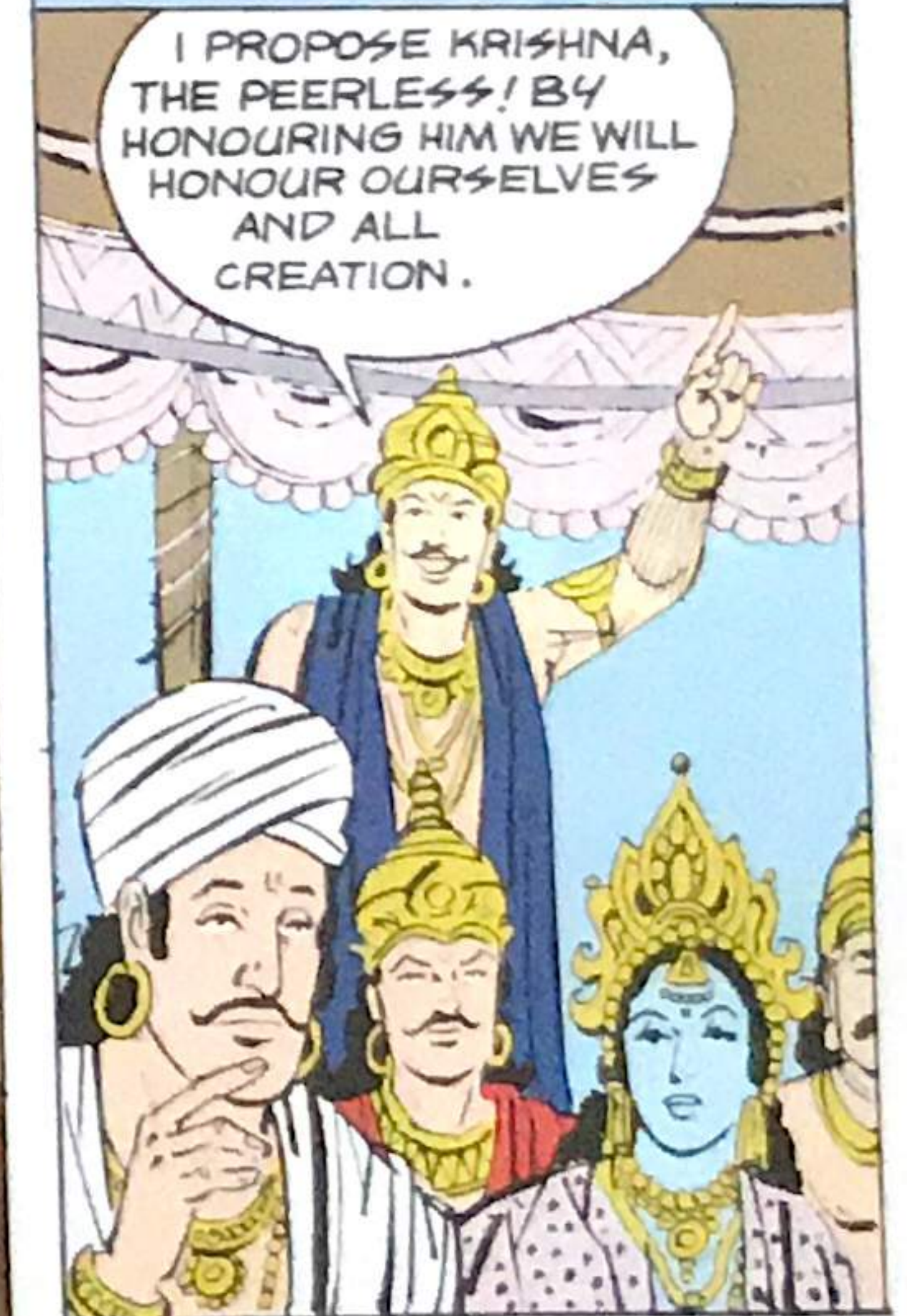
YUDHISHTHIRA WAS AT A LOSS. HE HAD THOUGHT OF EVERYTHING BUT THIS.



THERE ARE MANY PRESENT WHO ARE WORTHY OF THE PRIME HONOUR. WHAT SHALL I DO? WHOM SHALL I CHOOSE?

WHY DOES HE HESITATE? IS THERE ANY DOUBT TO WHOM THE HONOUR SHOULD GO?

WHEN YUDHISHTHIRA DID NOT SPEAK, SAHADEVA, THE YOUNGEST PANDAVA, STOOD UP.



I PROPOSE KRISHNA, THE PEERLESS! BY HONOURING HIM WE WILL HONOUR OURSELVES AND ALL CREATION.

AS YUDHISHTHIRA WAITED TENSELY FOR THE REACTION OF THE ASSEMBLY—



HEAR!
HEAR!

WELL
CHOSEN.

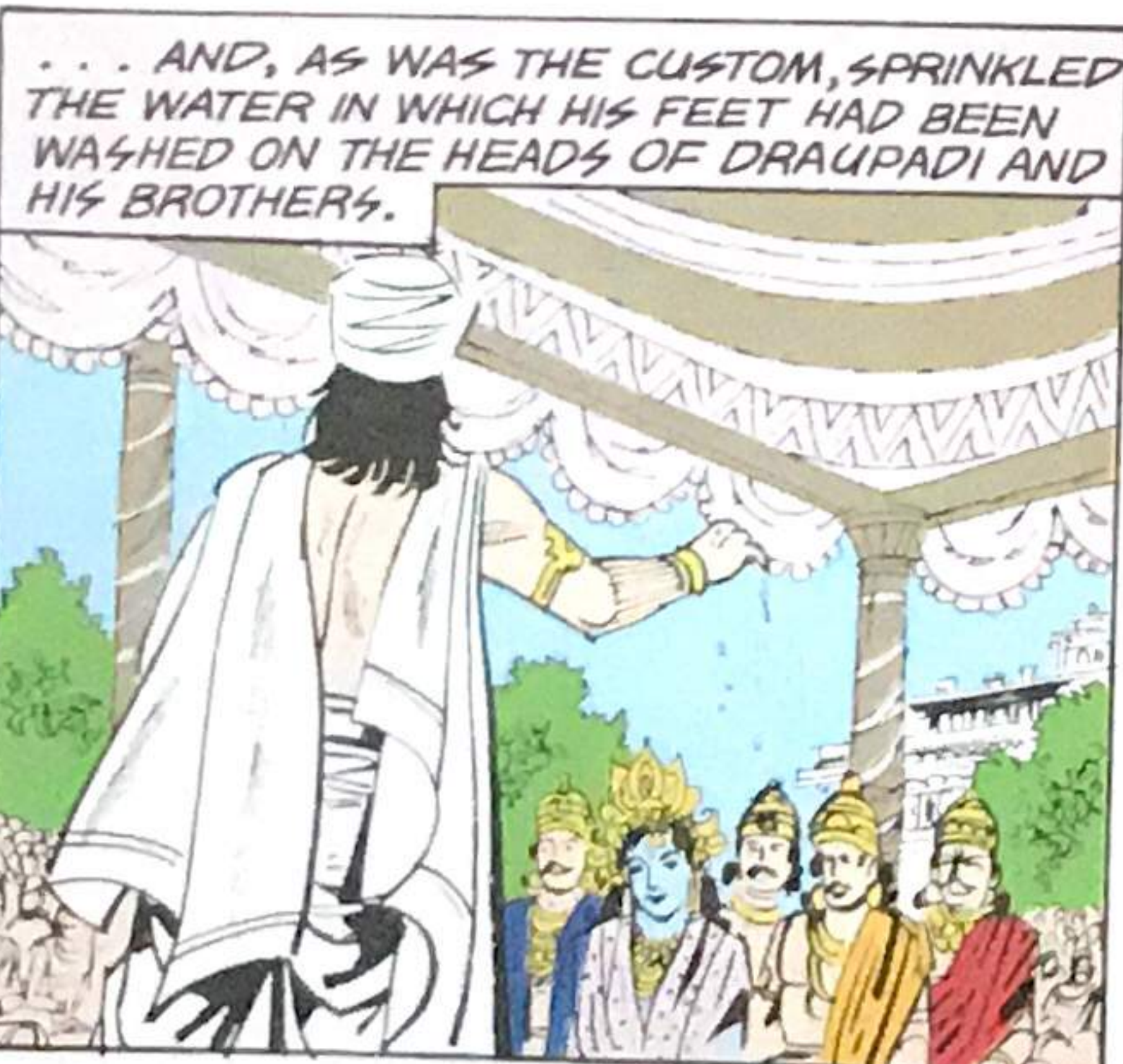
DEAR,
DEAR KRISHNA!
THOUGH NO ONE
DESERVES THIS
HONOUR MORE
THAN YOU DO, IT
IS GOOD TO SEE
THAT EVERY-
BODY APPROVES.



YUDHISHTHIRA
ROSE ...



... WASHED THE FEET OF
KRISHNA...



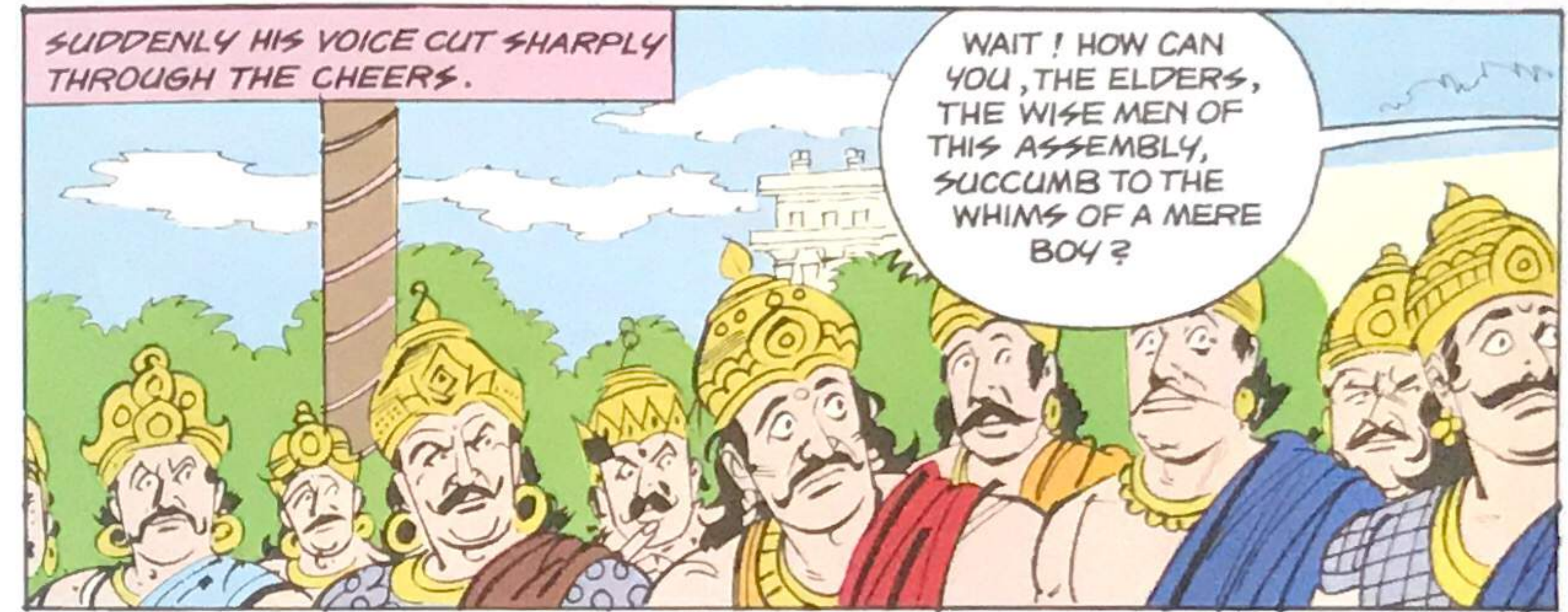
... AND, AS WAS THE CUSTOM, SPRINKLED
THE WATER IN WHICH HIS FEET HAD BEEN
WASHED ON THE HEADS OF DRAUPADI AND
HIS BROTHERS.

AS THE ASSEMBLY CHEERED
LOUDLY, SHISHUPALA GREW LIVID
WITH RAGE.



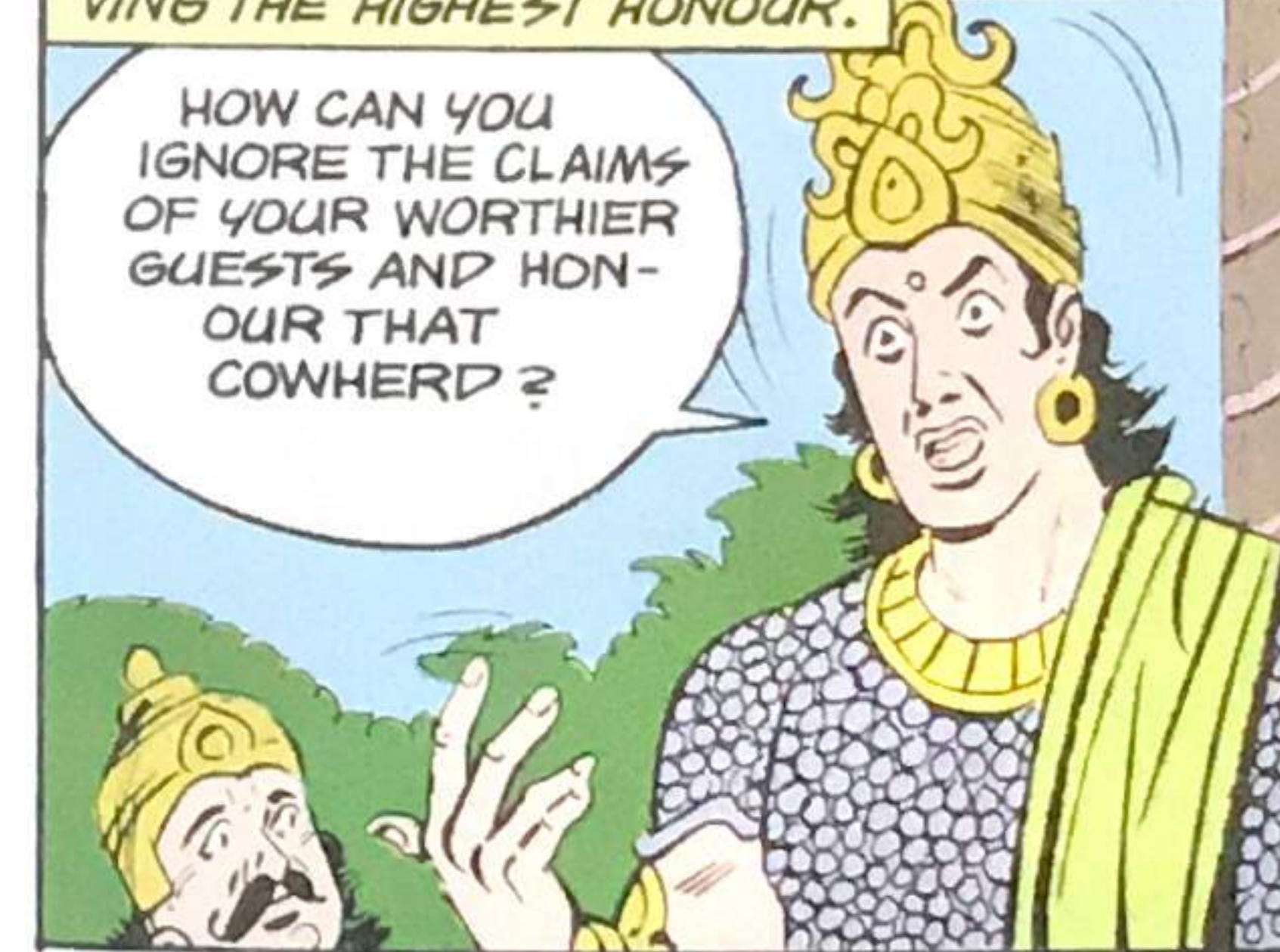
JAI!
JAI!

SUDDENLY HIS VOICE CUT SHARPLY
THROUGH THE CHEERS.



WAIT! HOW CAN
YOU, THE ELDERS,
THE WISE MEN OF
THIS ASSEMBLY,
SUCCUMB TO THE
WHIMS OF A MERE
BOY?

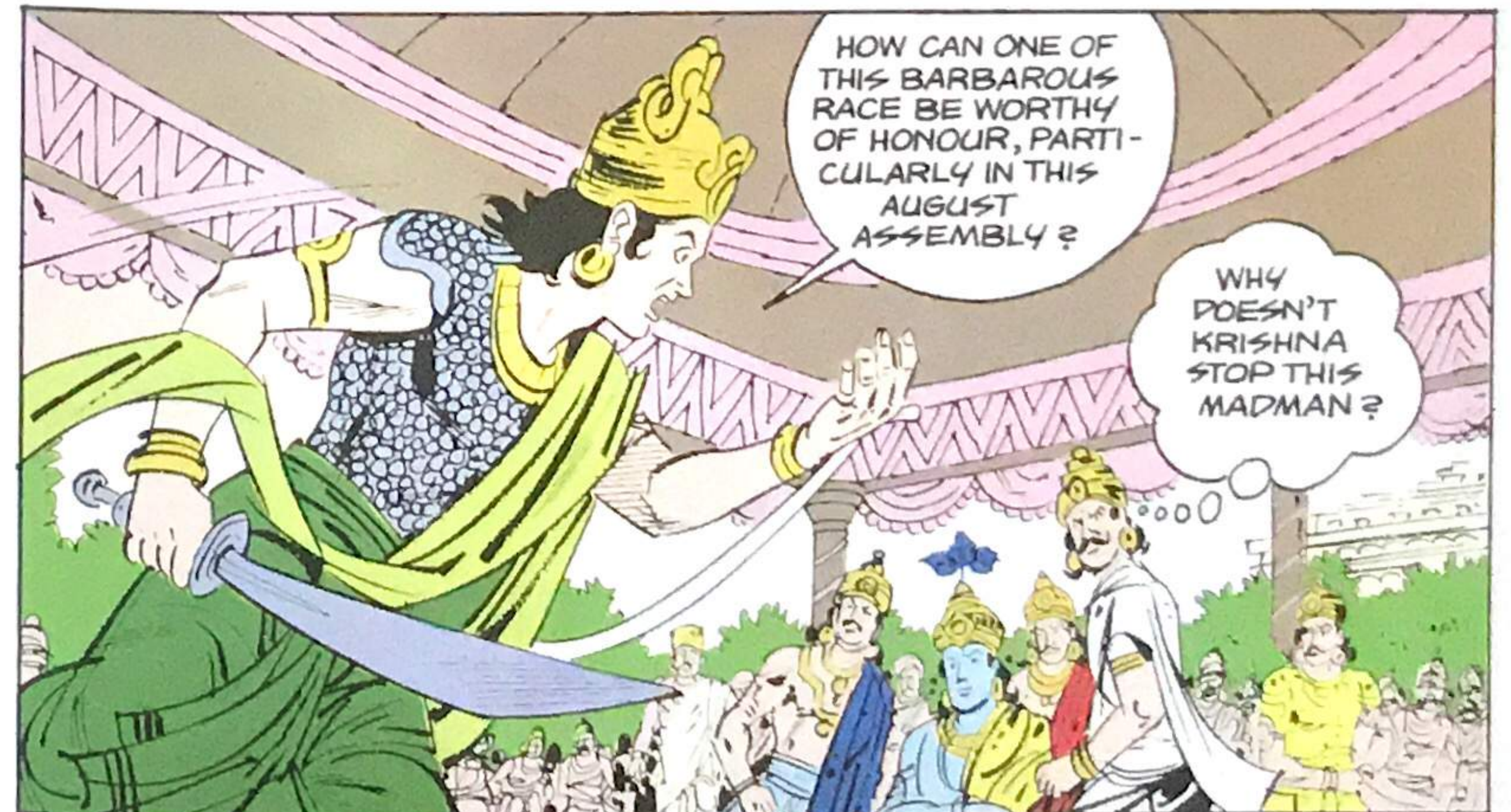
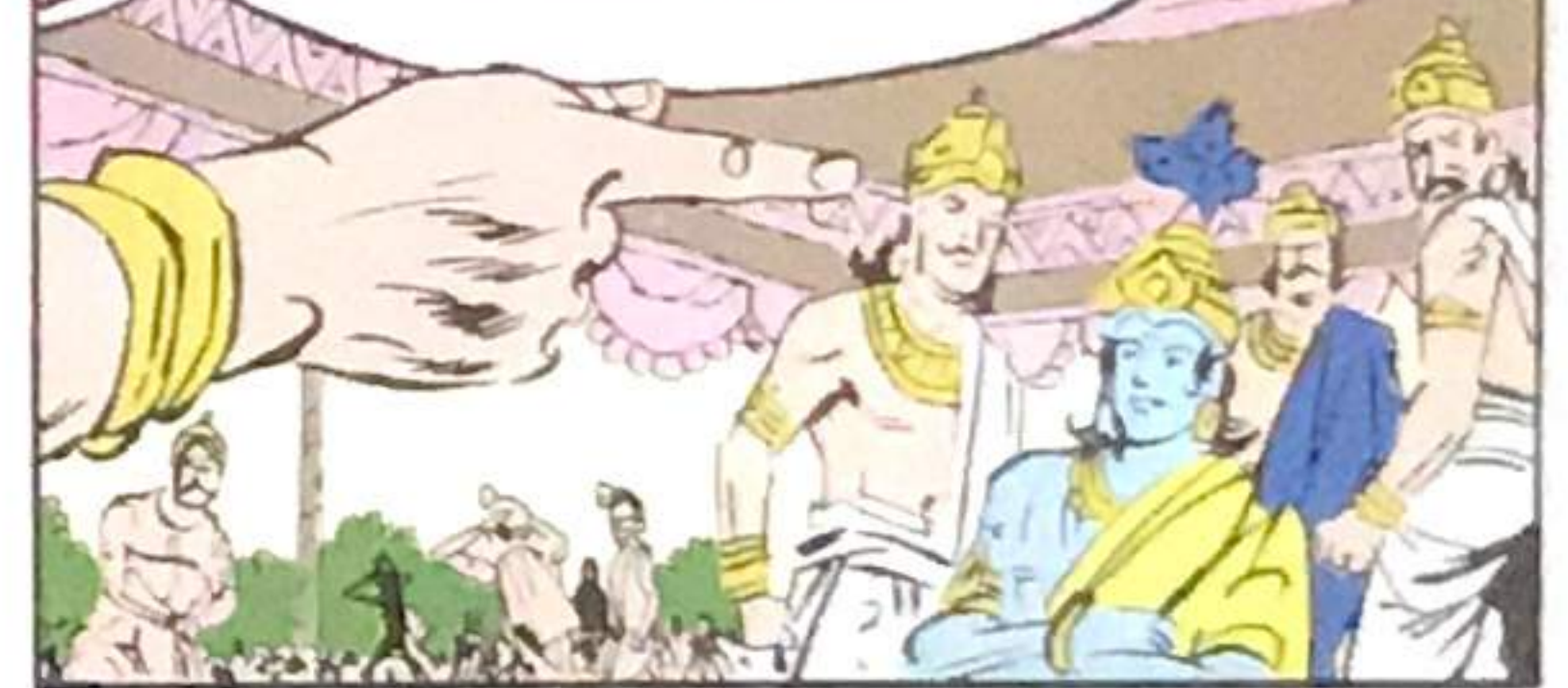
IT WAS SHISHUPALA. HE COULD NOT
BEAR TO SEE HIS WORST ENEMY RECEI-
VING THE HIGHEST HONOUR.



HOW CAN YOU
IGNORE THE CLAIMS
OF YOUR WORTHIER
GUESTS AND HON-
OUR THAT
COWHERD?

FEEDING HIS FURY WITH EACH
ABUSE, SHISHUPALA WENT ON.

ABANDONING THEIR OWN
KINGDOM, THE YADAVAS HAVE
TAKEN REFUGE IN AN ISLAND
WHICH HAS NO BRAHMAN — NO
VEDIC STUDIES. FROM THAT
HIDEOUT THEY TYRANNISE
VIRTUOUS KINGS.



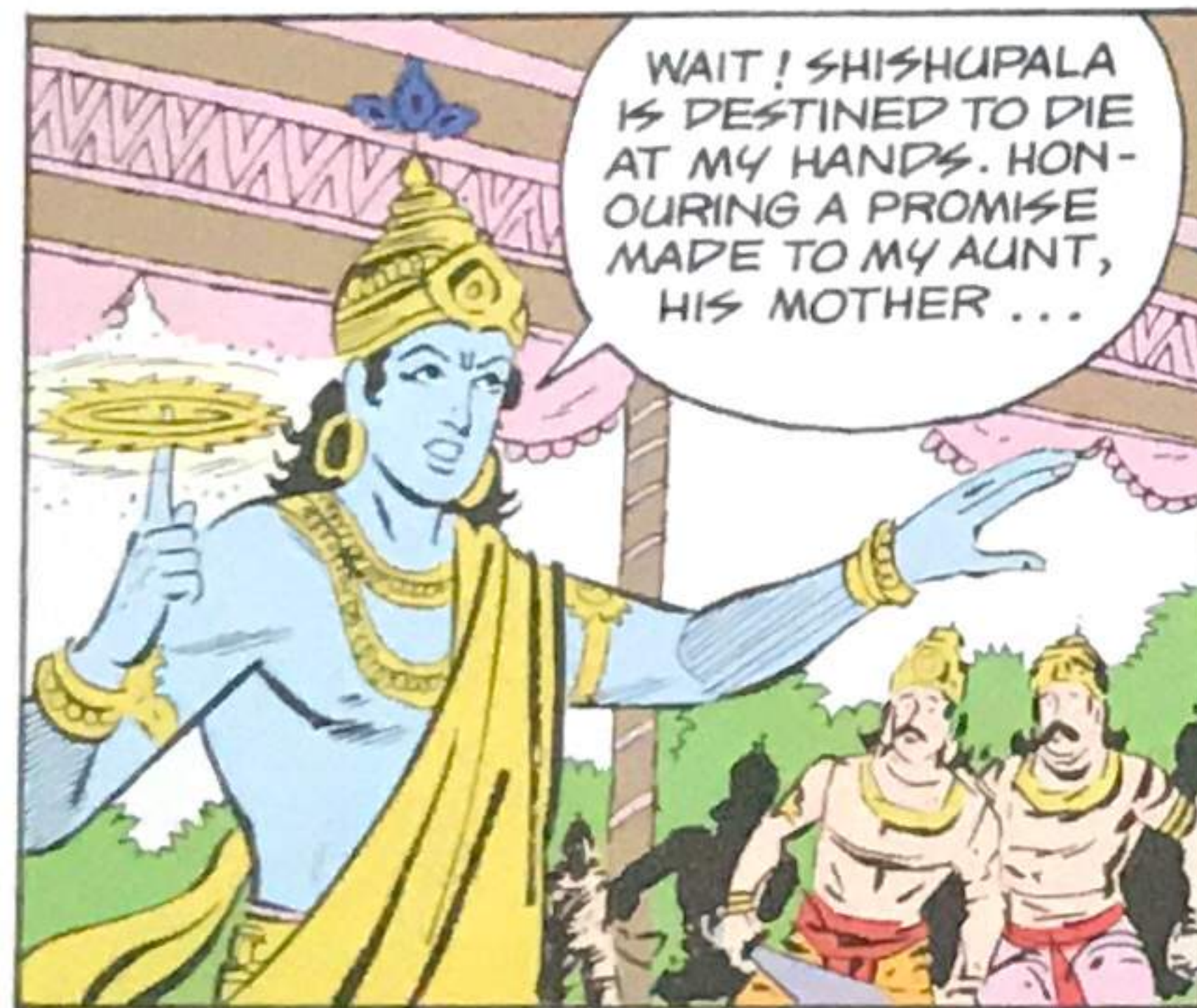
HOW CAN ONE OF
THIS BARBAROUS
RACE BE WORTHY
OF HONOUR, PARTI-
CULARLY IN THIS
AUGUST
ASSEMBLY?

WHY
DOESN'T
KRISHNA
STOP THIS
MADMAN?

WHEN THE PANDAVAS AND THEIR ALLIES CHARGED AT SHISHUPALA TO SILENCE HIM —



SHAME ON YOU, NOBLE KSHATRIYAS, WHO WOULD DRAW YOUR SWORDS FOR A WILY COWHERD!



WAIT! SHISHUPALA IS DESTINED TO DIE AT MY HANDS. HONOURING A PROMISE MADE TO MY AUNT, HIS MOTHER ...



... I HAVE PARDONED HIM A HUNDRED TIMES. HE HAS NOW EXCEEDED THAT NUMBER. HIS TIME IS UP.



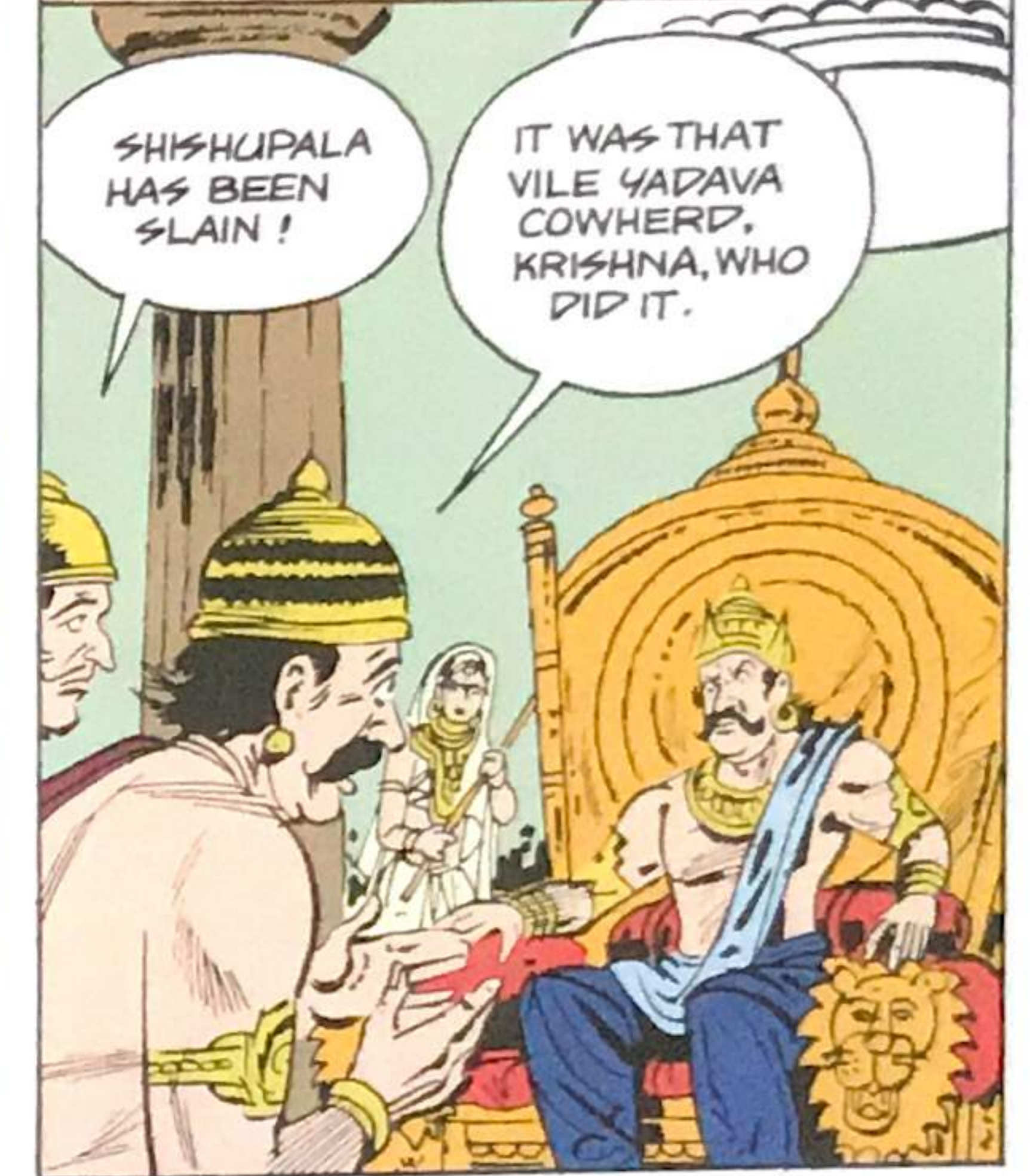
SEEING THEIR SUZERAIN FALL, THE VASSAL CHIEFTAINS OF CHEDI FLED FOR THEIR LIVES.



QUICK! LET US ESCAPE AND CARRY THE NEWS TO SHALVA.

I'LL STAY BEHIND AND BRING NEWS OF THEIR PLANS.

WHEN THE CHIEFTAINS WHO HAD FLED, REACHED SHALVA'S COURT —



SHISHUPALA HAS BEEN SLAIN!

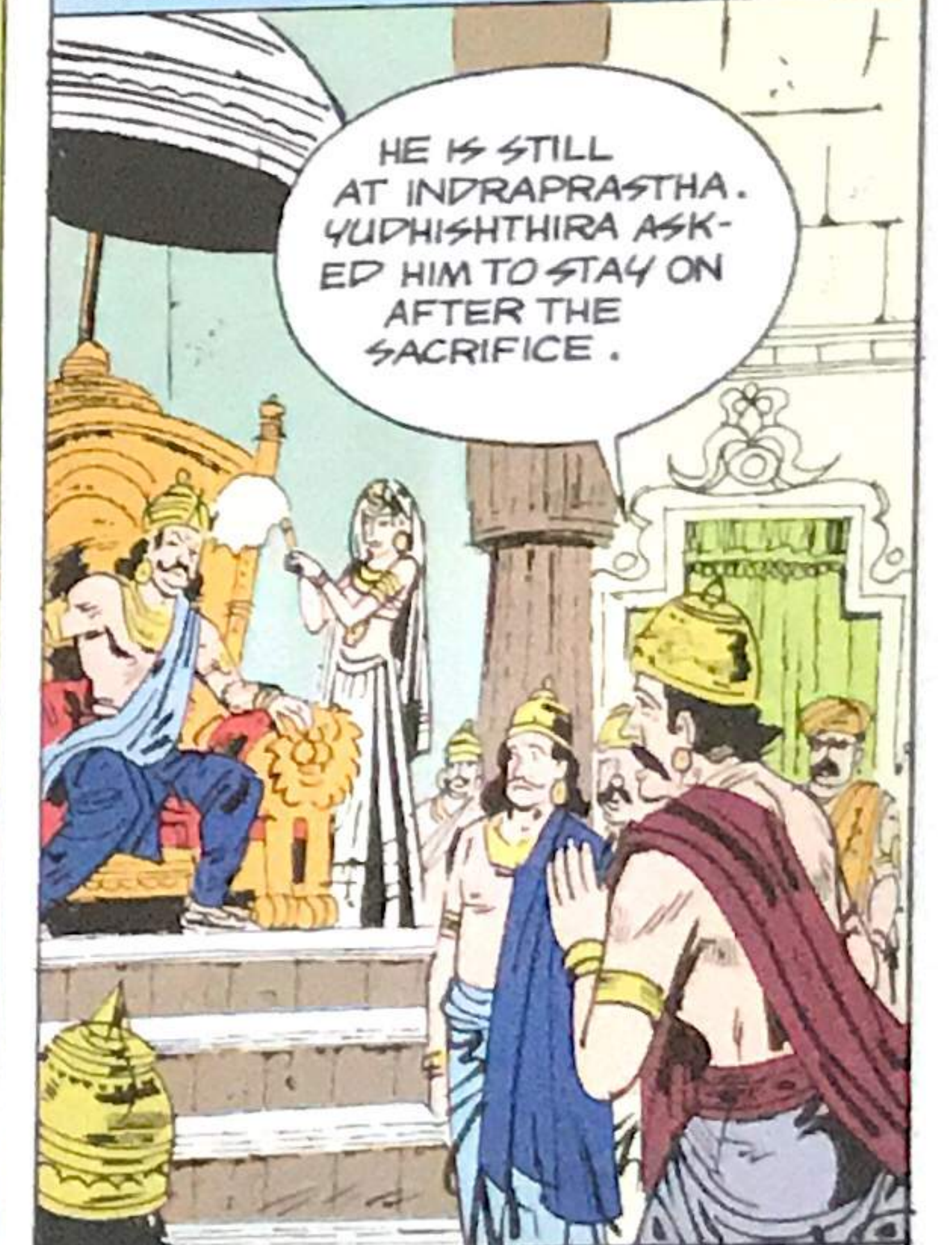
IT WAS THAT VILE YADAVA COWHERD, KRISHNA, WHO DID IT.

SORROW AND ANGER OVERCAME SHALVA.

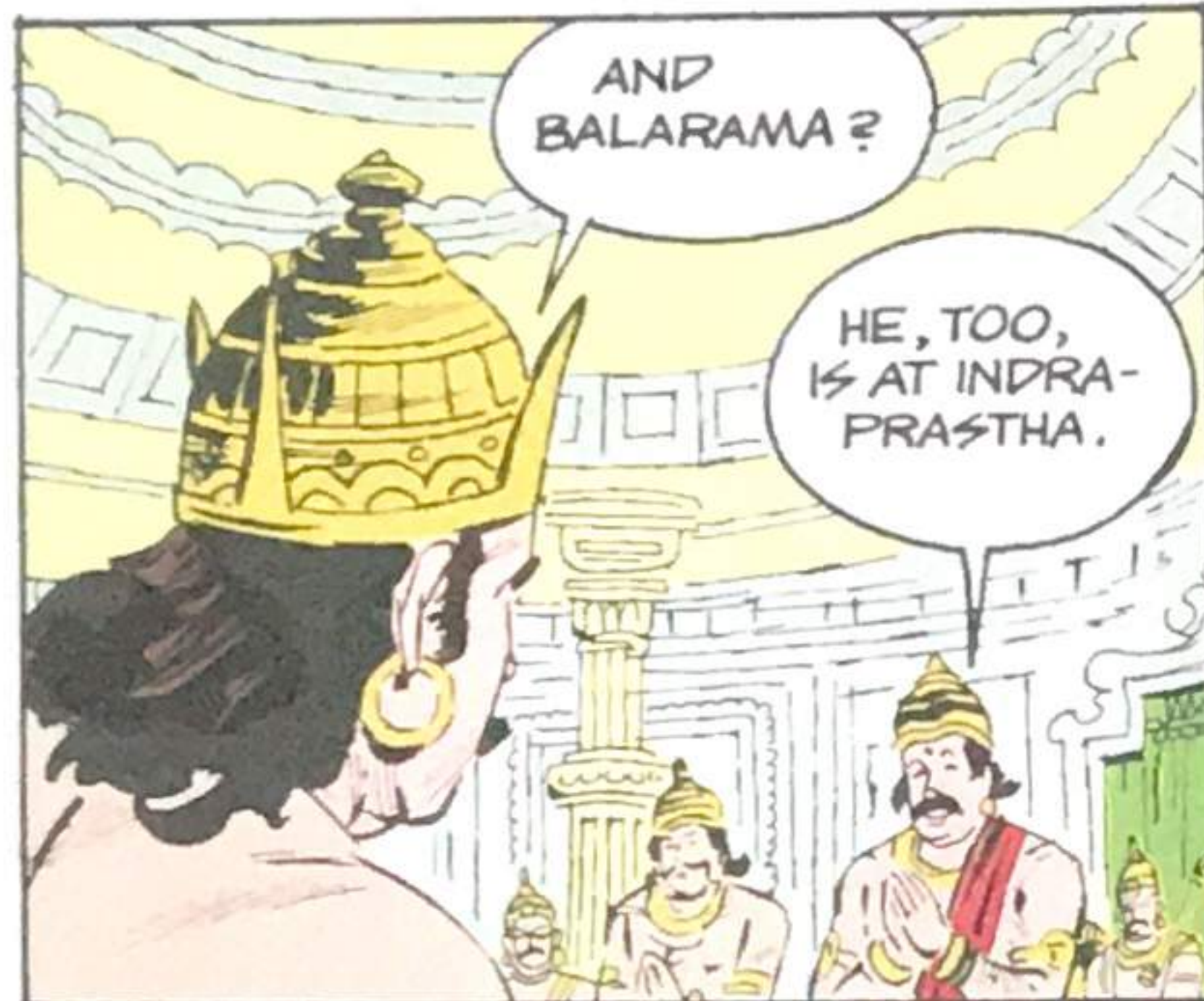


HE STOLE MY FRIEND'S BRIDE AND NOW HE HAS TAKEN HIS VERY LIFE. WHERE IS KRISHNA?

JUST THEN THE CHIEFTAIN WHO HAD STAYED BACK, ENTERED —

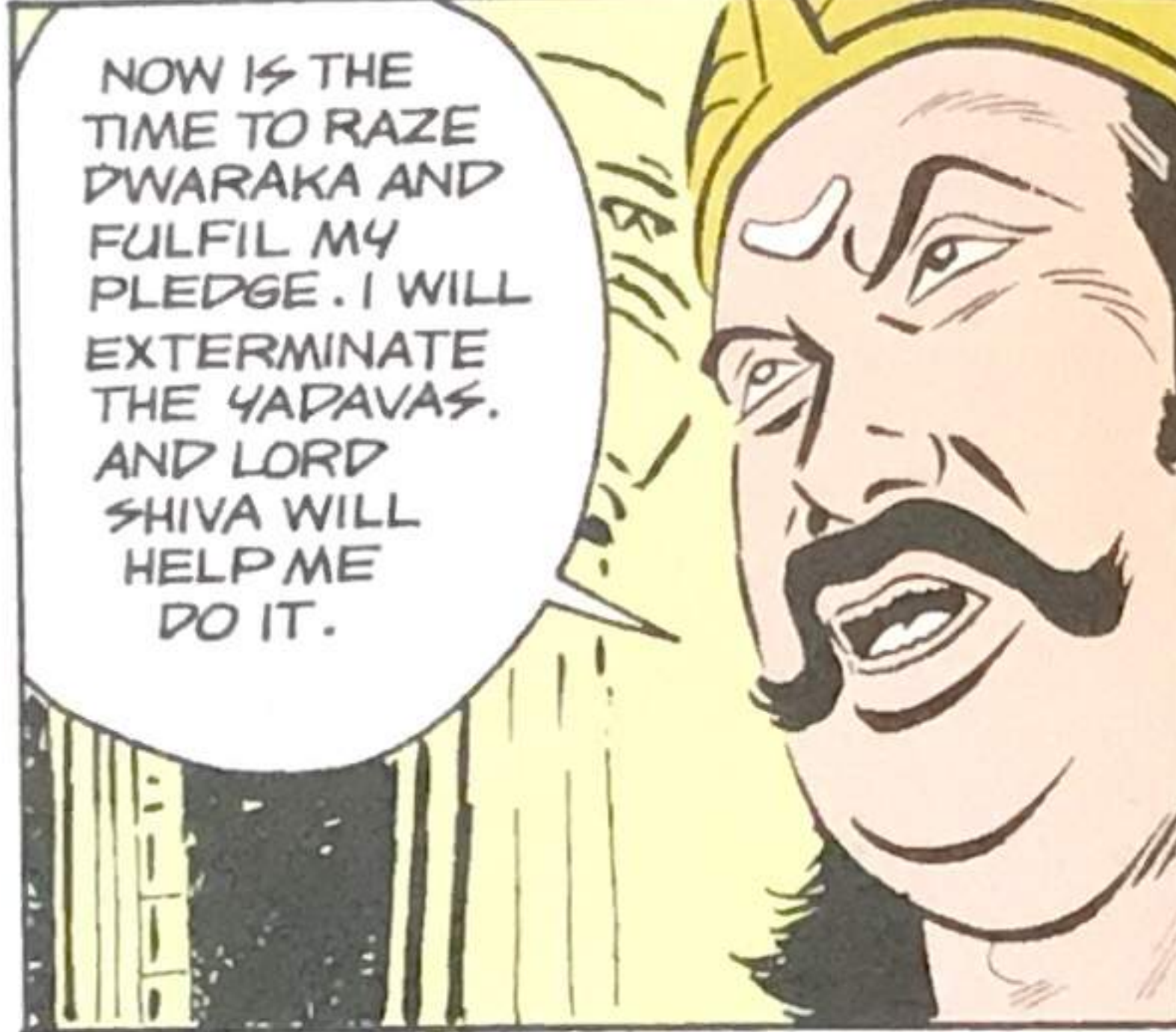


HE IS STILL AT INDRAPRASTHA. YUDHISHTHIRA ASKED HIM TO STAY ON AFTER THE SACRIFICE.



AND BALARAMA?

HE, TOO, IS AT INDRA-PRASTHA.



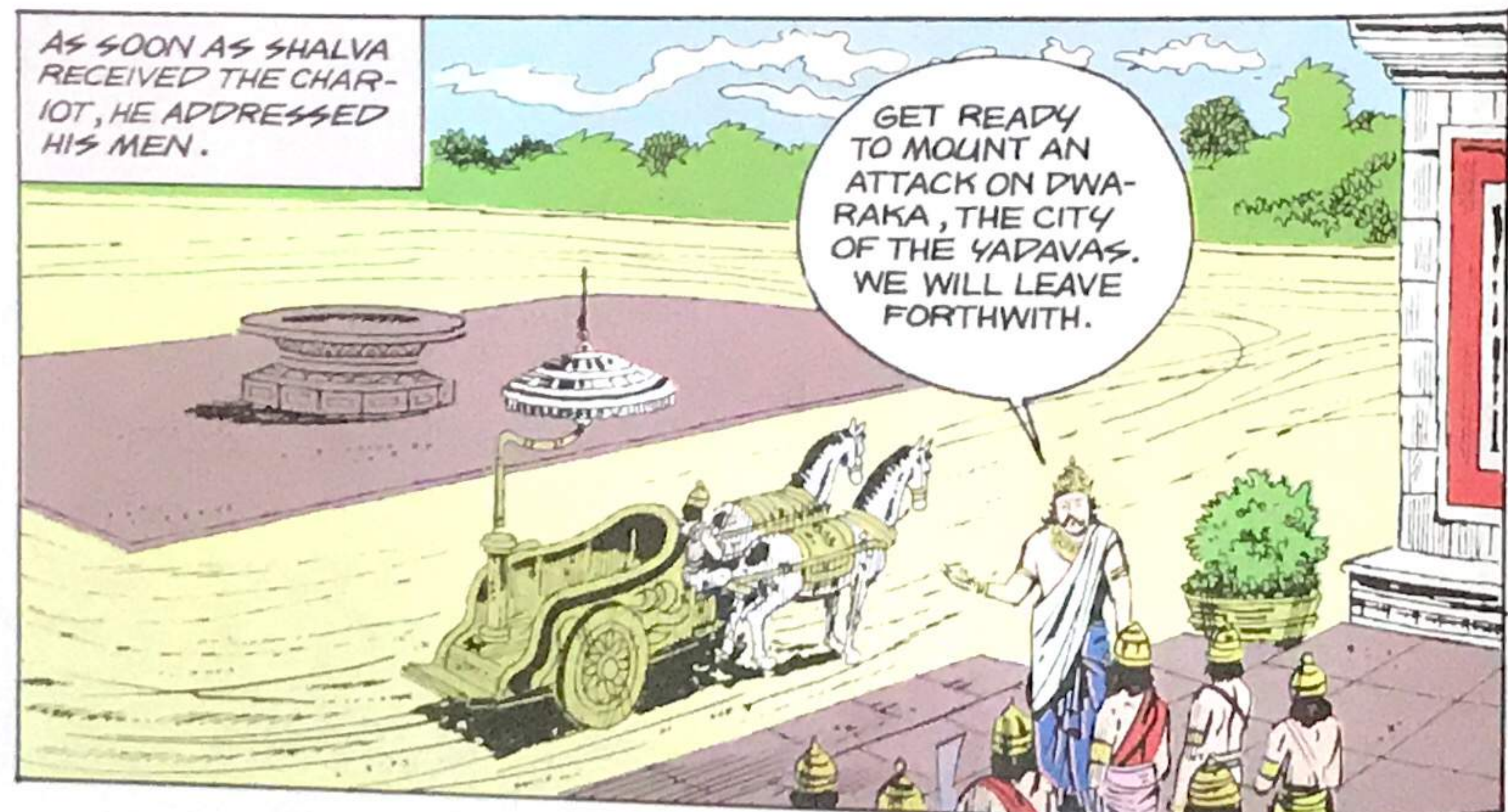
NOW IS THE TIME TO RAZE DWARAKA AND FULFIL MY PLEDGE. I WILL EXTERMINATE THE YADAVAS. AND LORD SHIVA WILL HELP ME DO IT.



SHALVA PERFORMED SEVERAL PENANCES TO APPEASE LORD SHIVA. WHEN SHIVA AT LAST APPEARED BEFORE HIM—

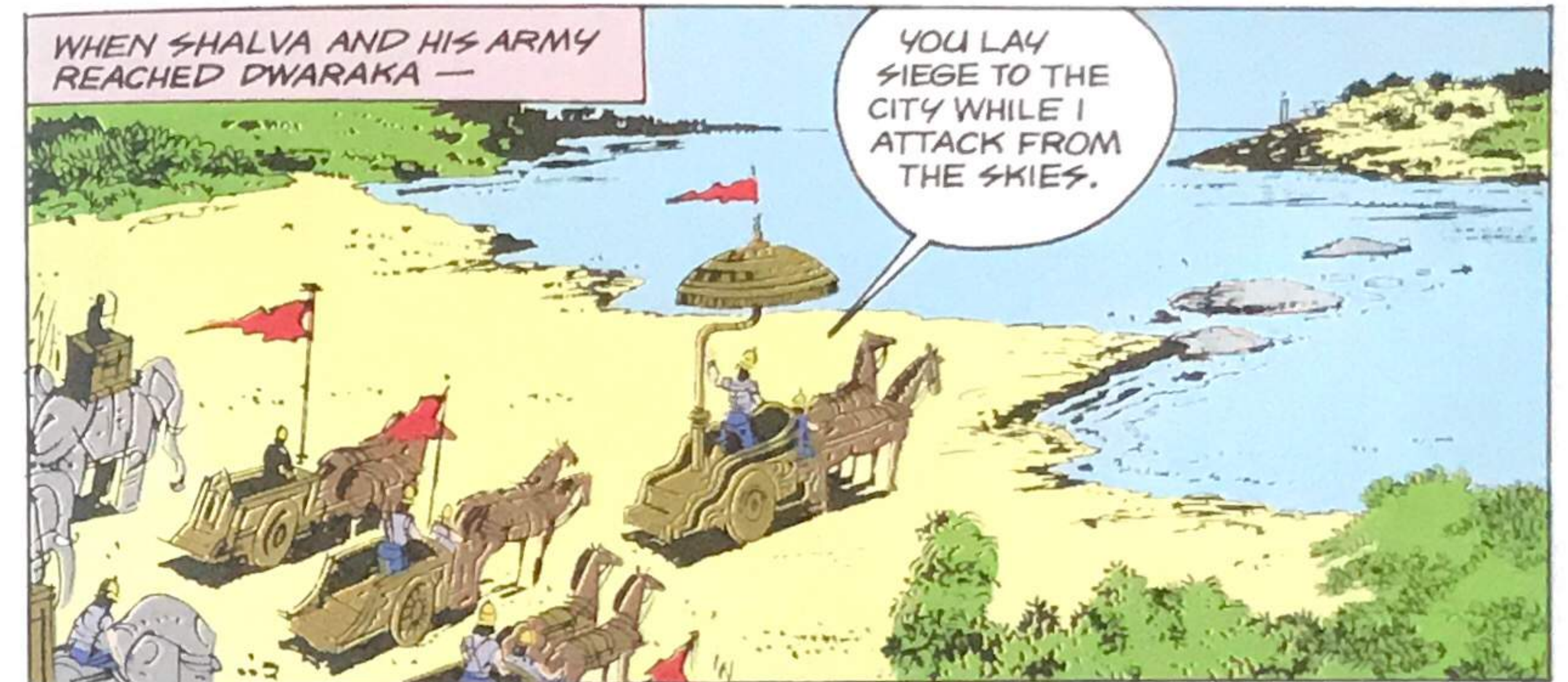
O LORD, GIVE ME A CHARIOT THAT CAN BECOME INVISIBLE AT MY COMMAND AND THAT CAN TRAVEL ON WATER, AIR AND EARTH ALIKE.

YOU SHALL HAVE IT. MAYA* WILL BRING IT TO YOU.



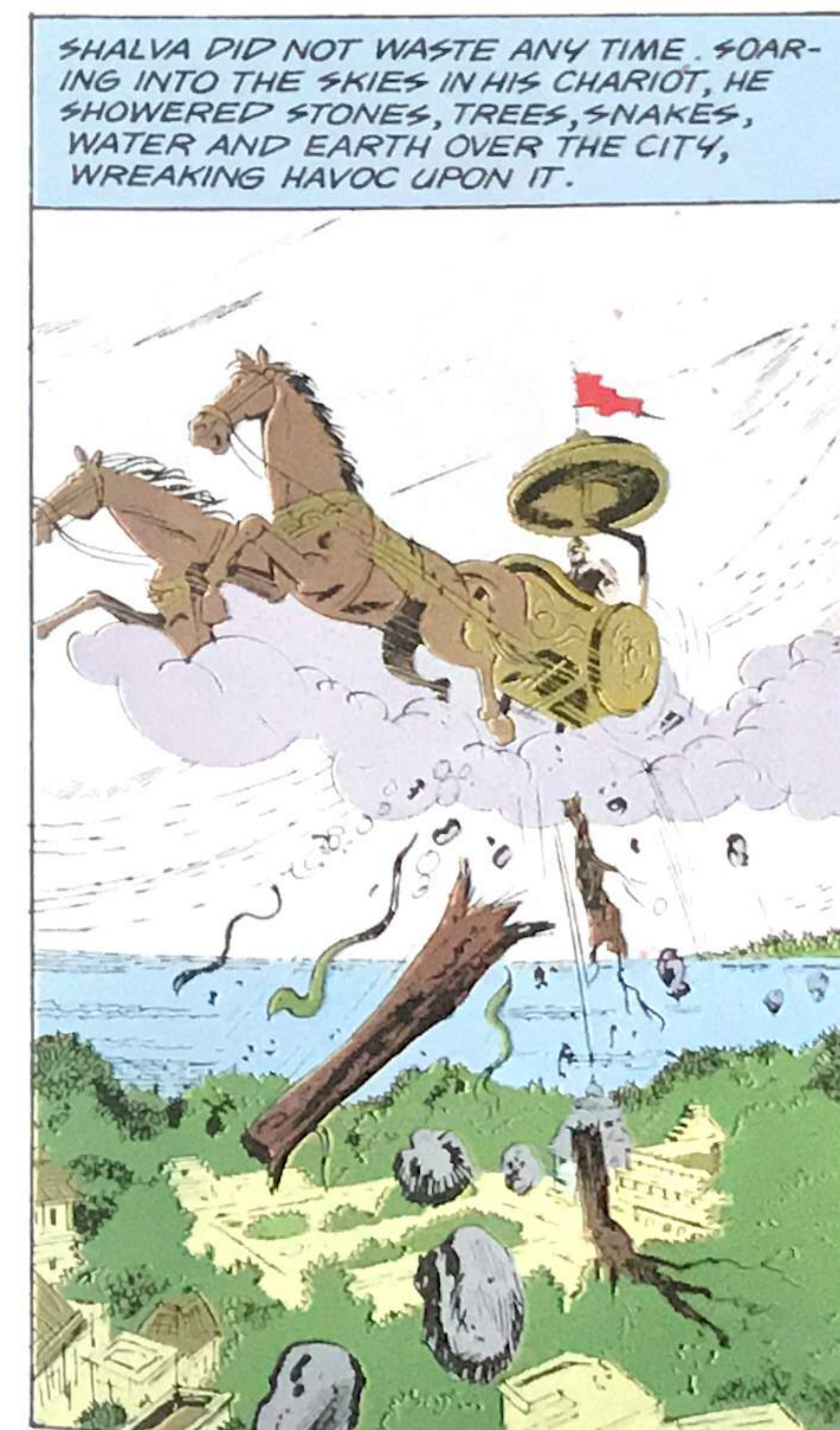
AS SOON AS SHALVA RECEIVED THE CHARIOT, HE ADDRESSED HIS MEN.

GET READY TO MOUNT AN ATTACK ON DWARAKA, THE CITY OF THE YADAVAS. WE WILL LEAVE FORTHWITH.



WHEN SHALVA AND HIS ARMY REACHED DWARAKA —

YOU LAY SIEGE TO THE CITY WHILE I ATTACK FROM THE SKIES.

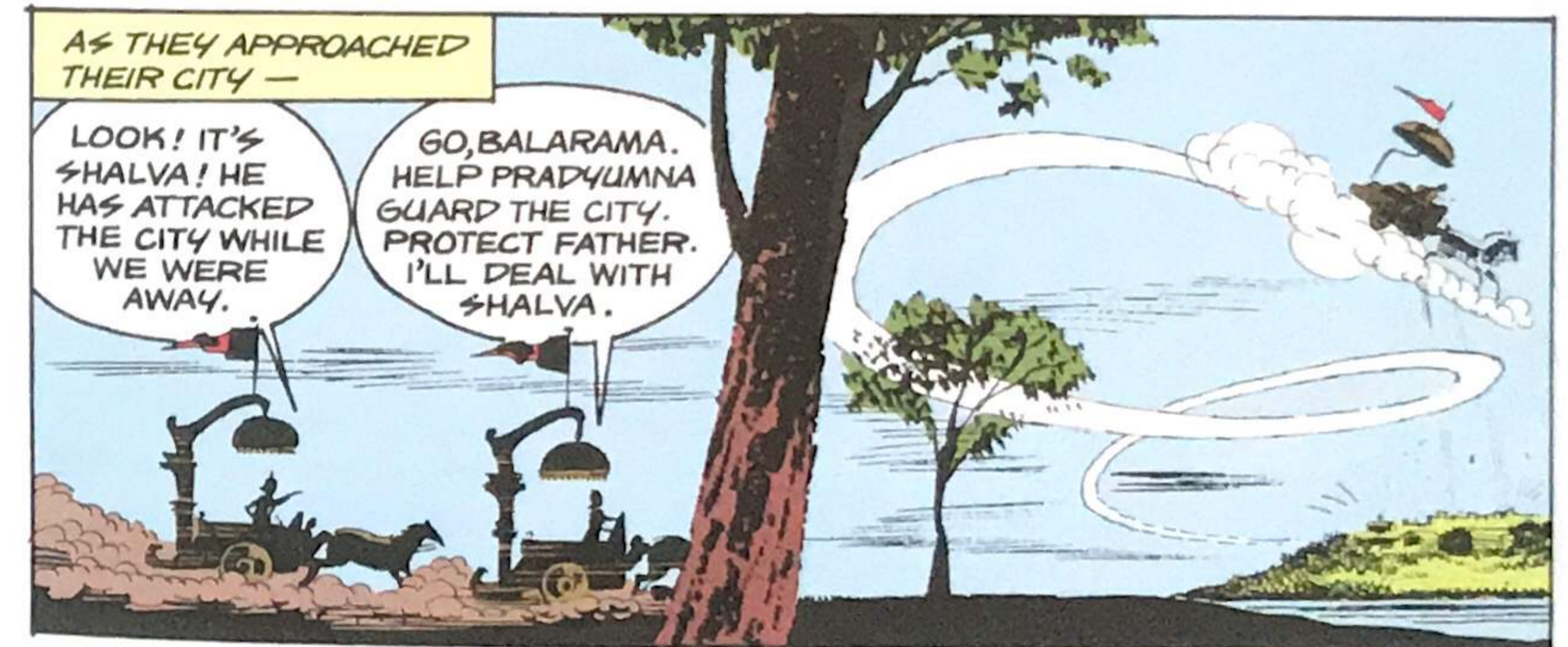
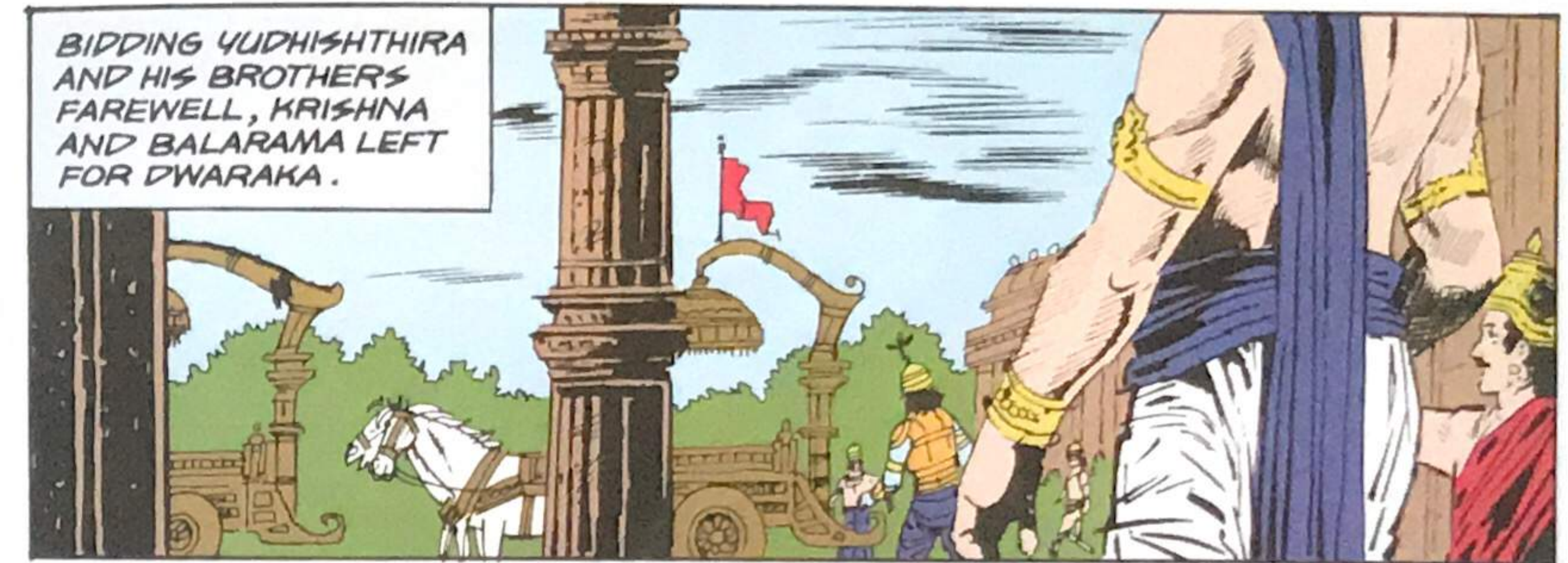
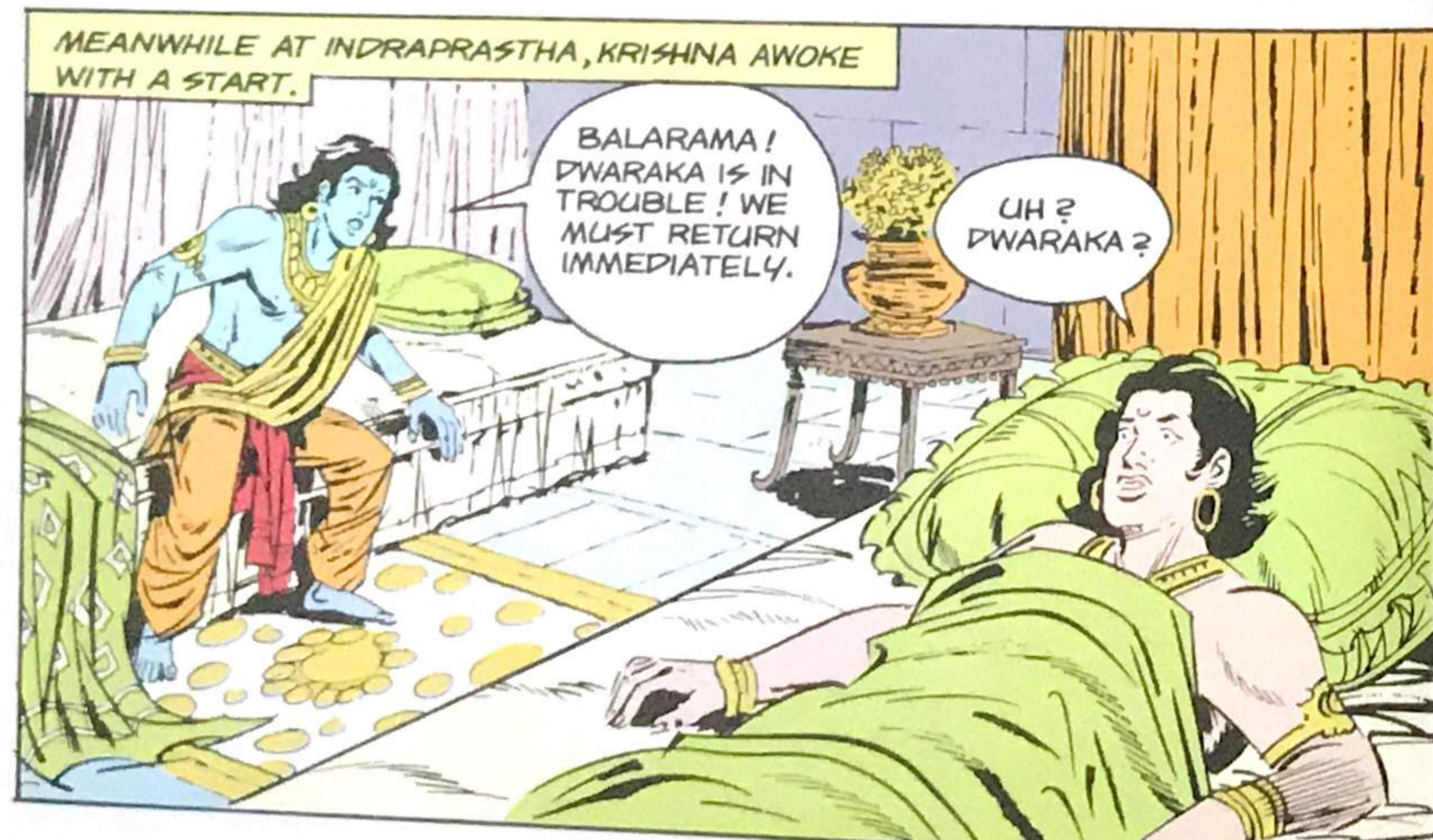
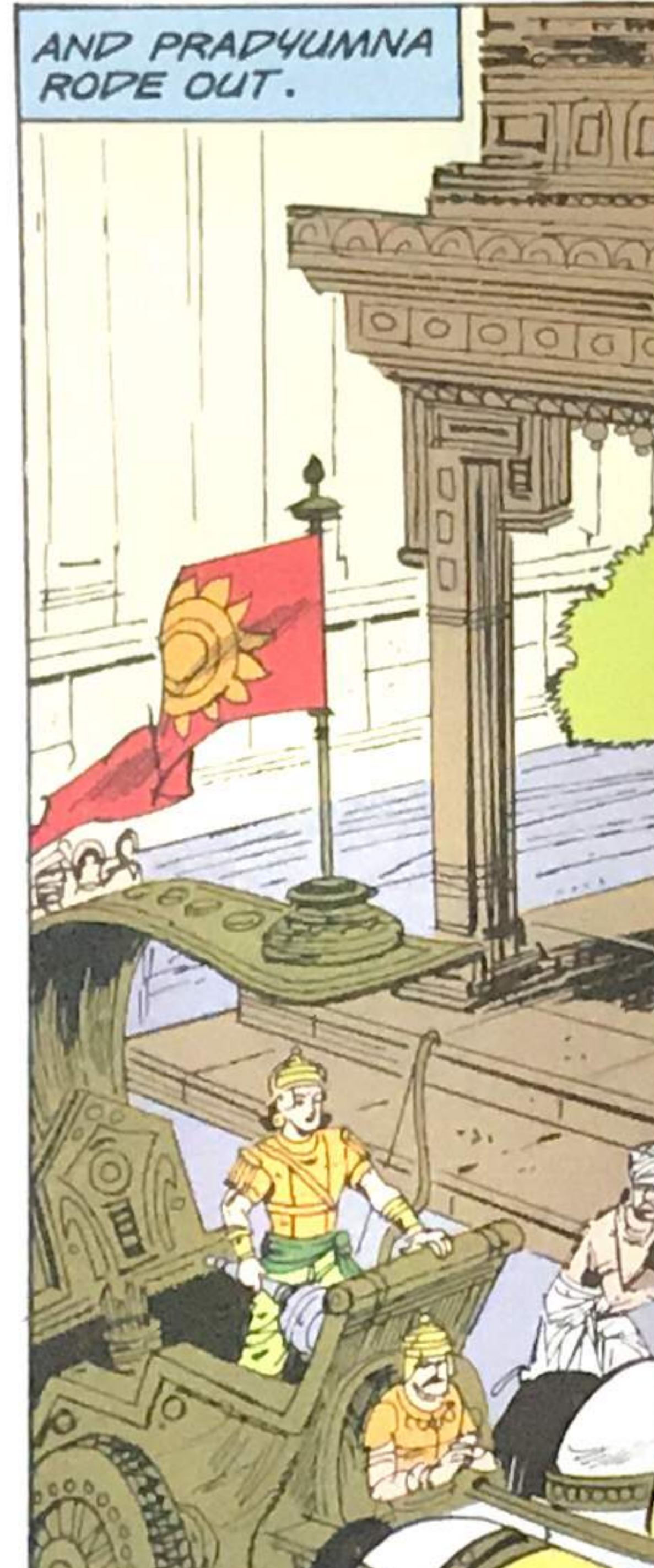


SHALVA DID NOT WASTE ANY TIME. SOARING INTO THE SKIES IN HIS CHARIOT, HE SHOWERED STONES, TREES, SNAKES, WATER AND EARTH OVER THE CITY, WREAKING HAVOC UPON IT.



THE CITIZENS OF DWARAKA RUSHED IN ALARM TO PRADYUMNA.

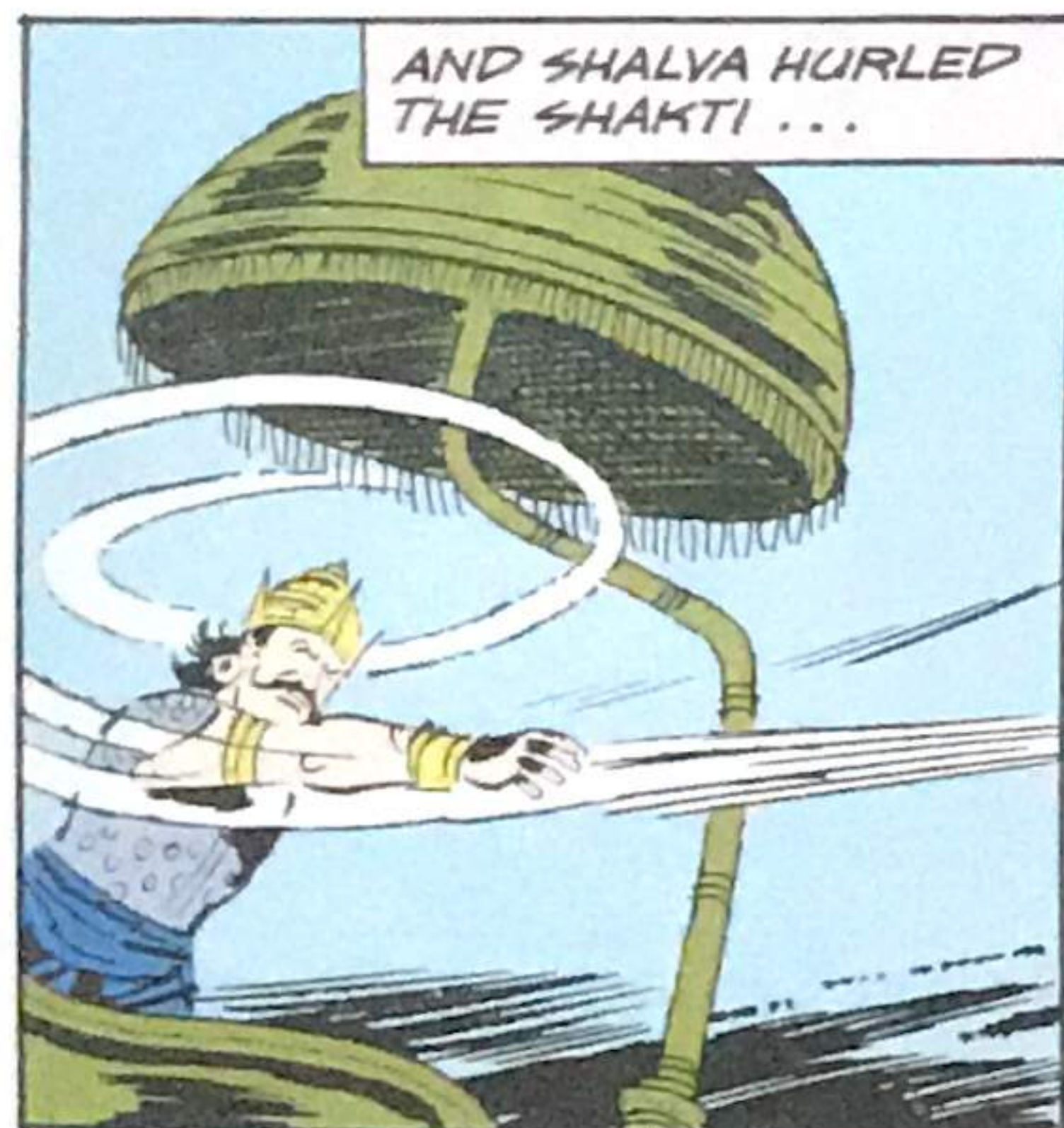
LORD! LORD! WE ARE BEING ATTACKED... FROM THE SKIES!



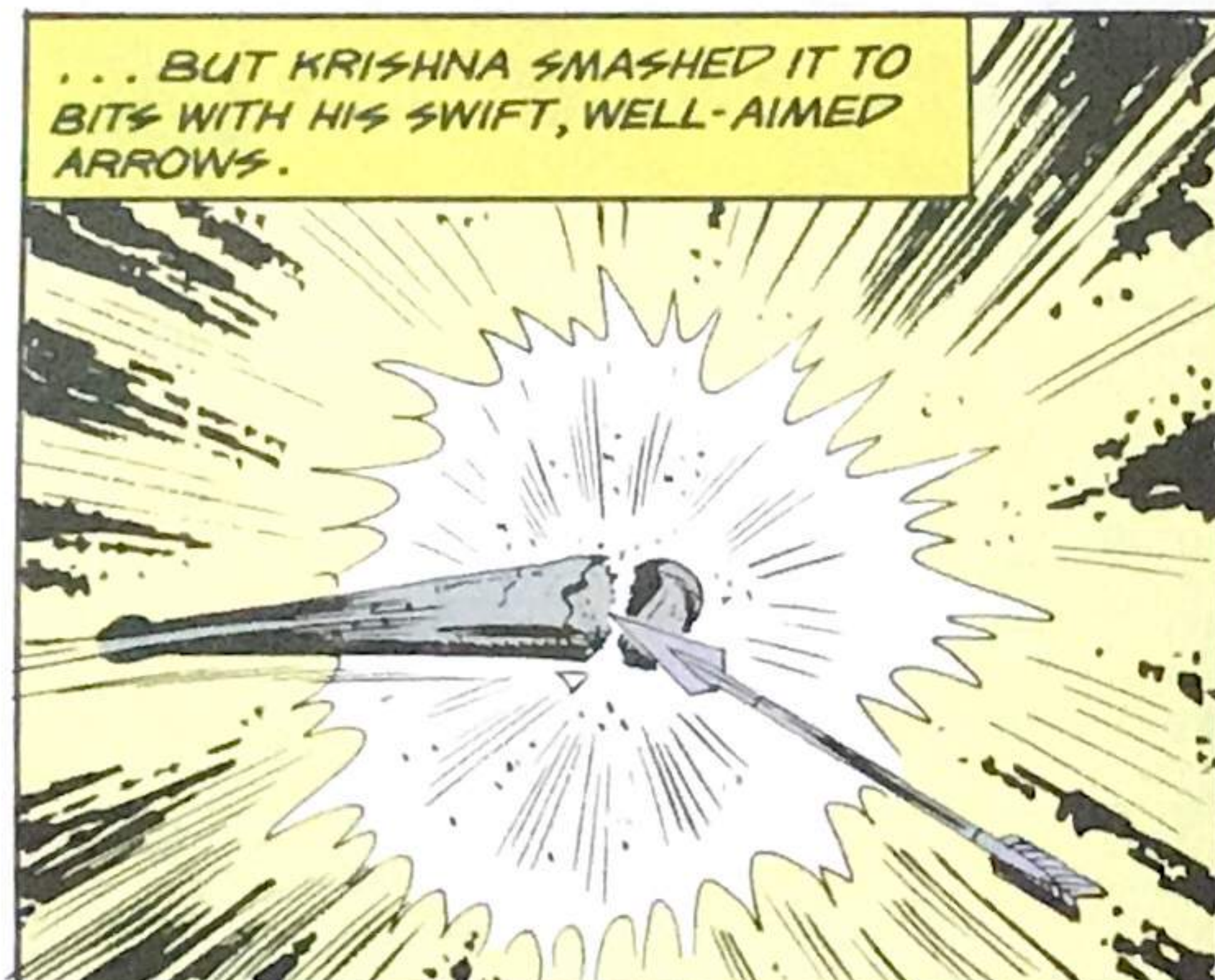
IN FACT IT WAS SHALVA WHO WAS FRIGHTENED FOR A MOMENT.



AND SHALVA HURLED
THE SHAKTI ...



... BUT KRISHNA SMASHED IT TO
BITS WITH HIS SWIFT, WELL-AIMED
ARROWS.



I'LL DESTROY
FOREVER THE BOW
THAT SENT THOSE
ARROWS AND THE
HAND THAT WIELD-
ED IT!



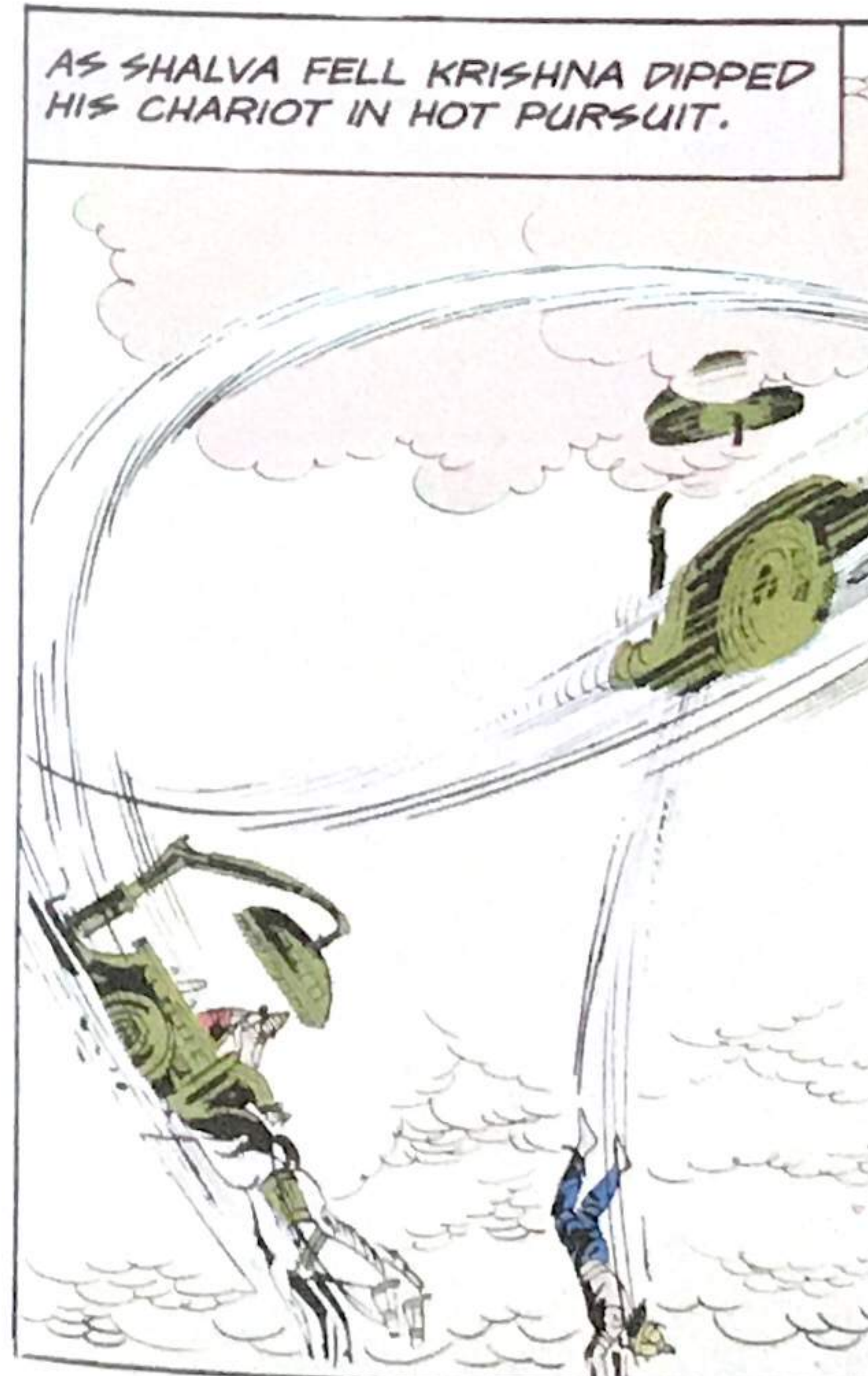
WITH A TRIUMPHANT ROAR, SHALVA
MADE FOR KRISHNA.



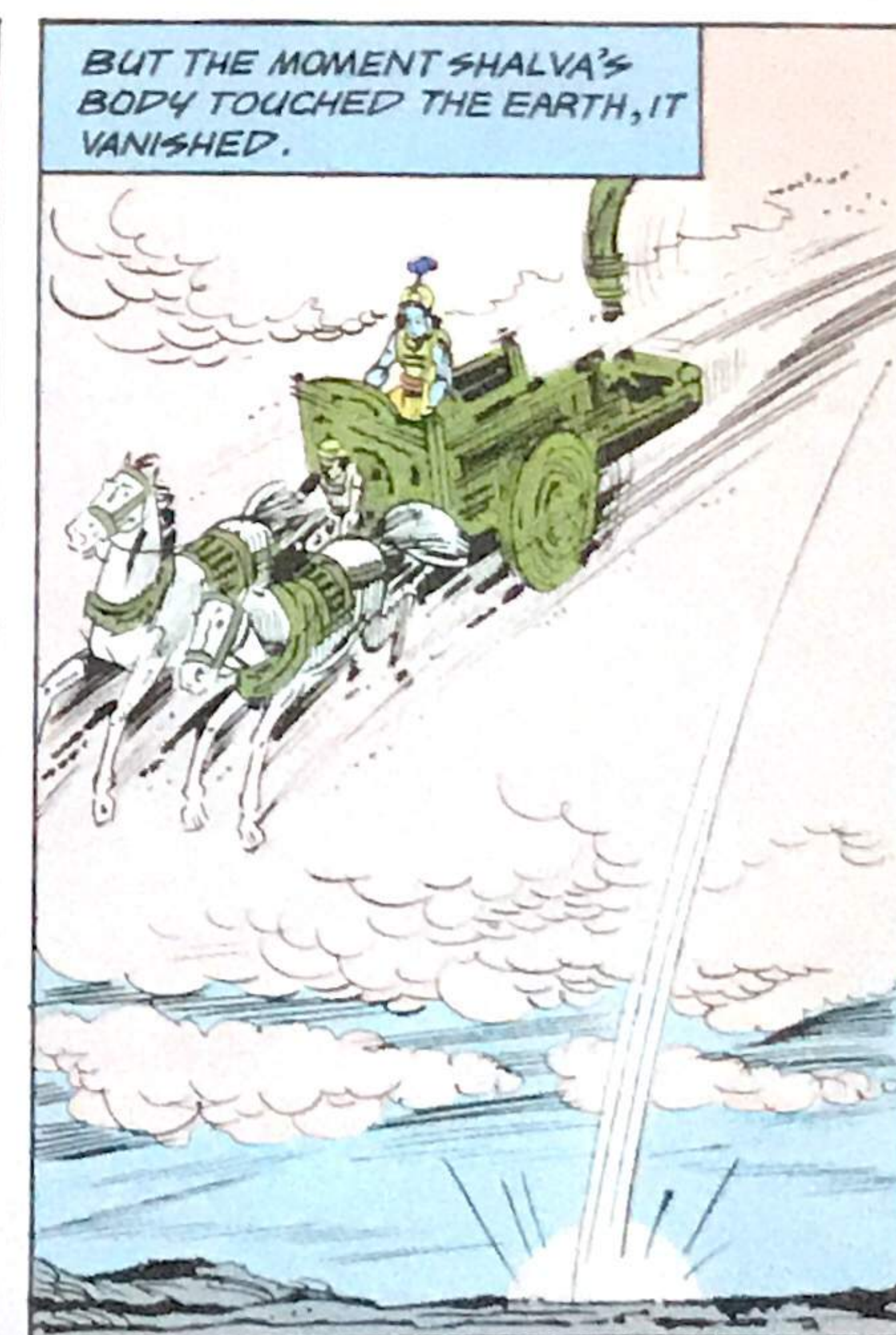
BUT THE NEXT
MOMENT, KRISHNA
SWUNG OUT WITH
HIS MACE AND
HIT SHALVA.



AS SHALVA FELL KRISHNA DIPPED
HIS CHARIOT IN HOT PURSUIT.

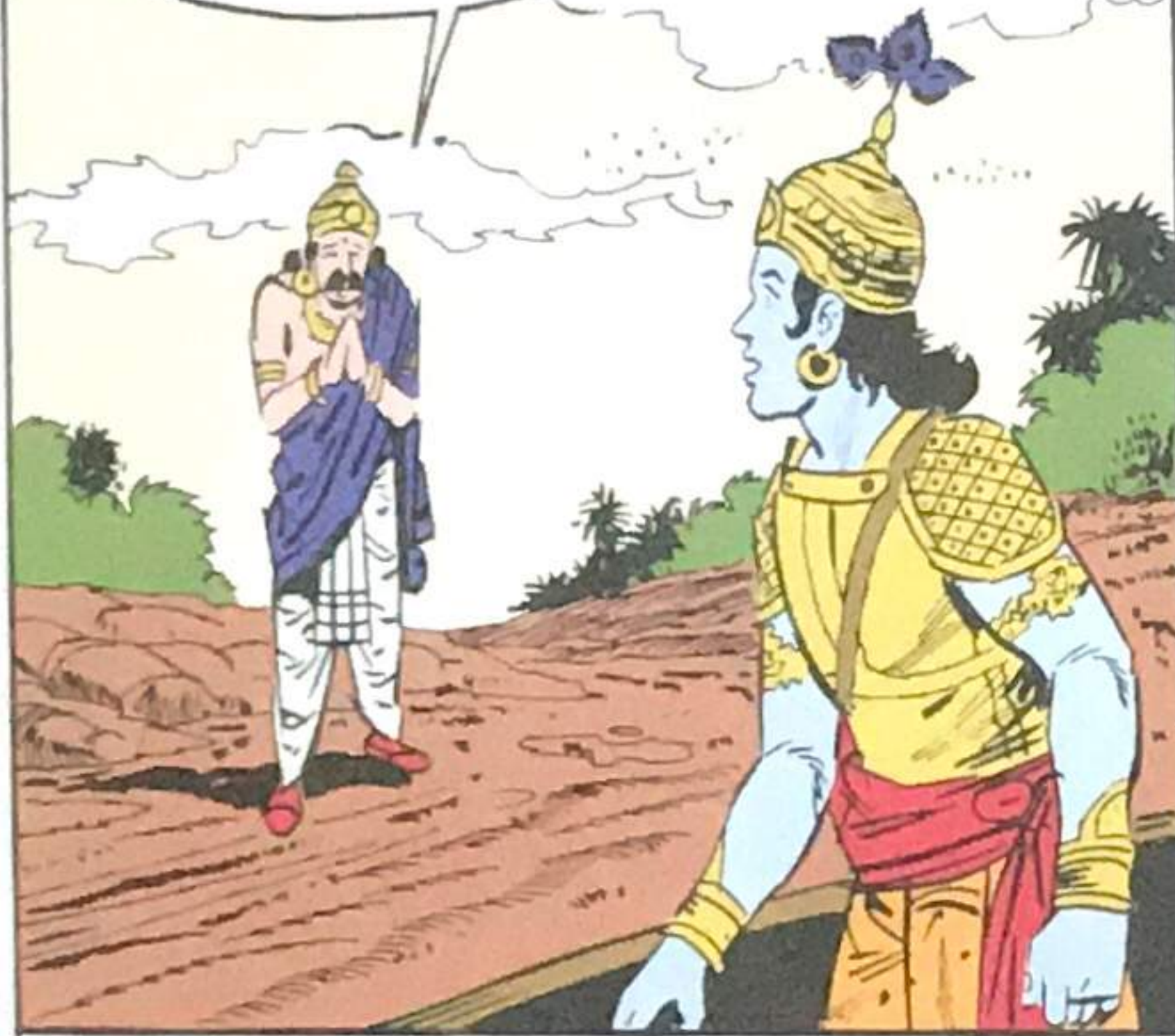


BUT THE MOMENT SHALVA'S
BODY TOUCHED THE EARTH, IT
VANISHED.

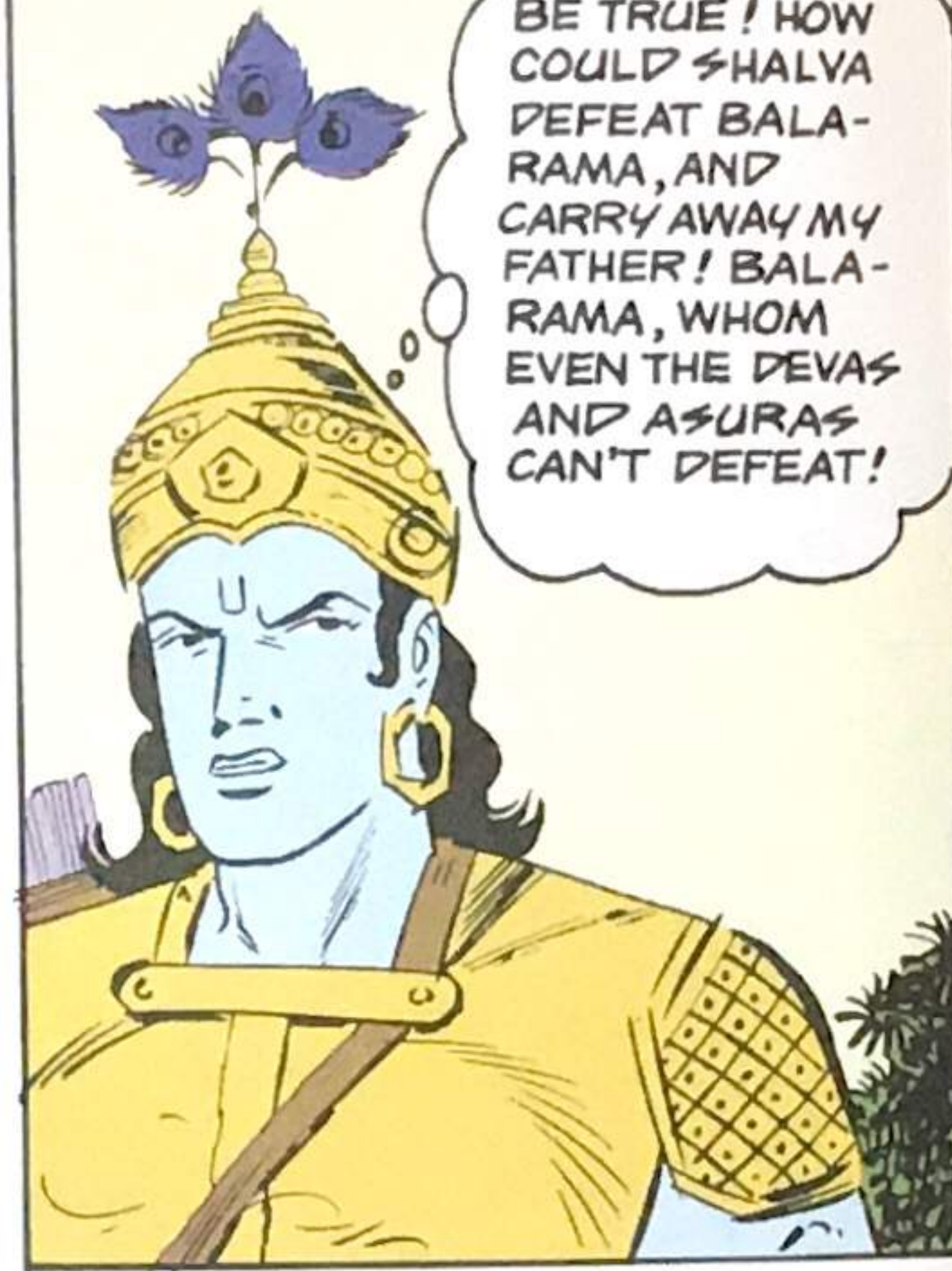


AND A FEW MINUTES LATER, A MAN STOOD BEFORE KRISHNA, HIS HEAD BOWED, HIS EYES STREAMING WITH TEARS.

I HAVE BEEN SENT BY DEVAKI. O KRISHNA, SHALVA HAS CARRIED AWAY YOUR FATHER!



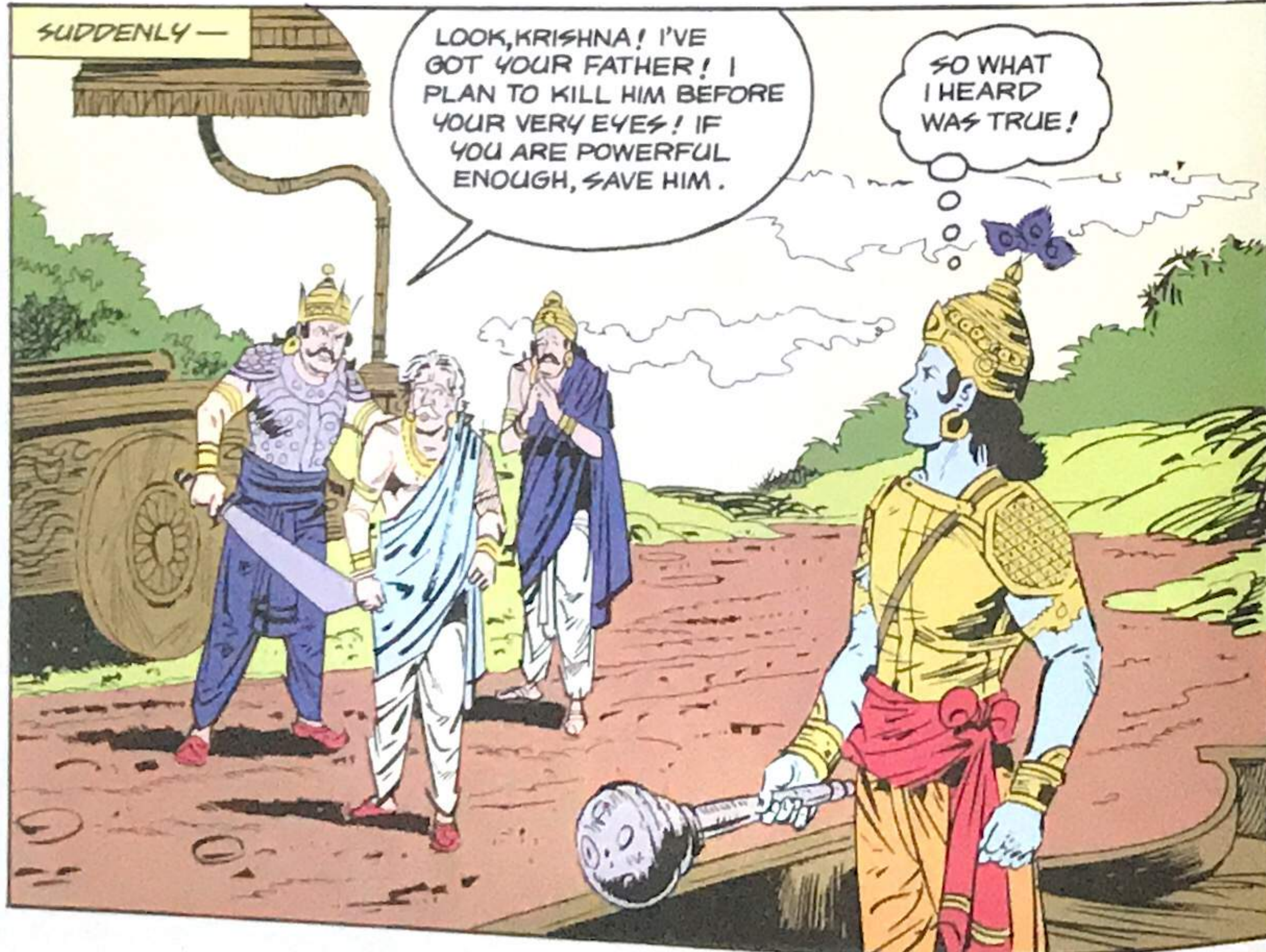
IT CANNOT BE TRUE! HOW COULD SHALVA DEFEAT BALARAMA, AND CARRY AWAY MY FATHER! BALARAMA, WHOM EVEN THE DEVAS AND ASURAS CAN'T DEFEAT!



SUDDENLY —

LOOK, KRISHNA! I'VE GOT YOUR FATHER! I PLAN TO KILL HIM BEFORE YOUR VERY EYES! IF YOU ARE POWERFUL ENOUGH, SAVE HIM.

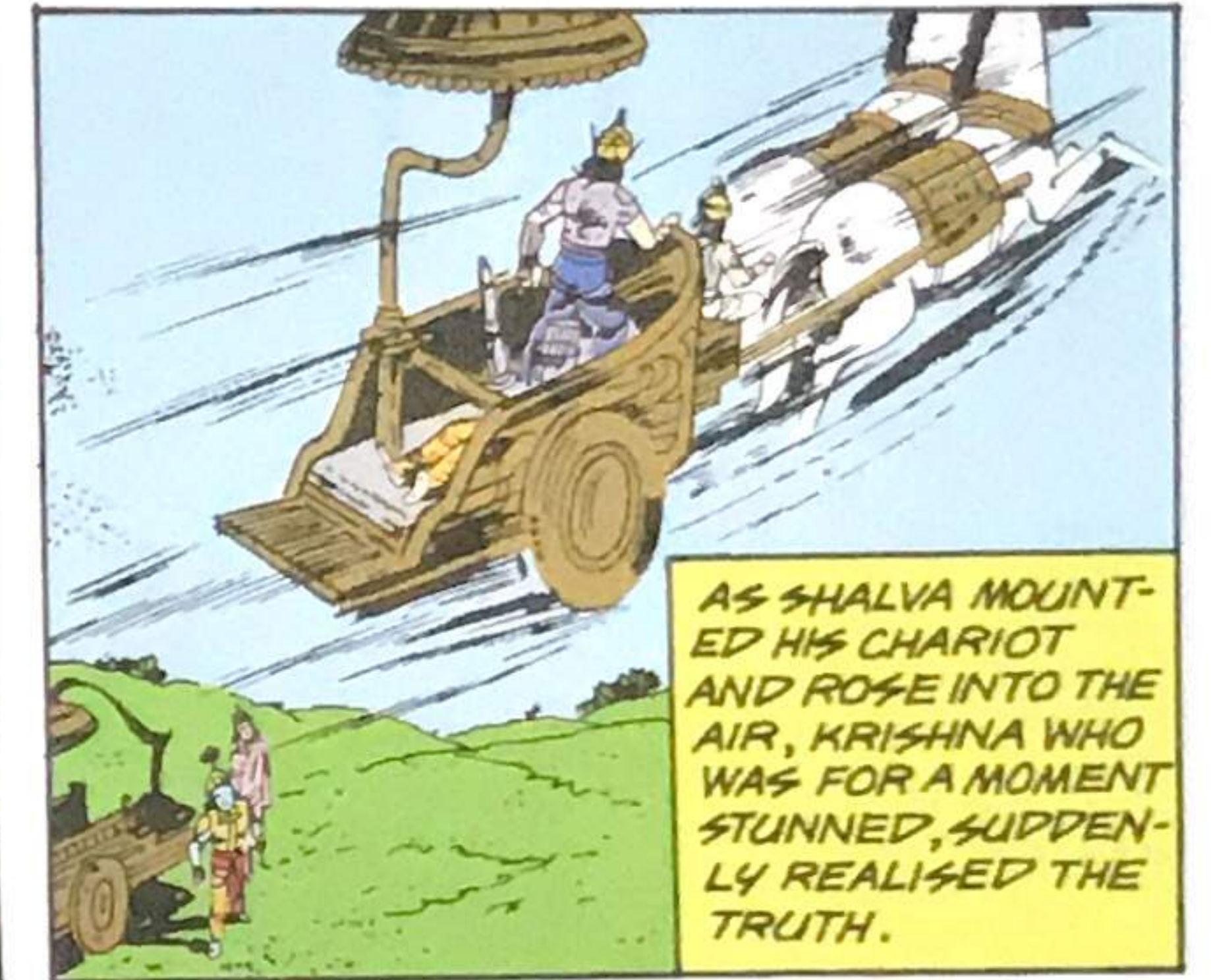
SO WHAT I HEARD WAS TRUE!



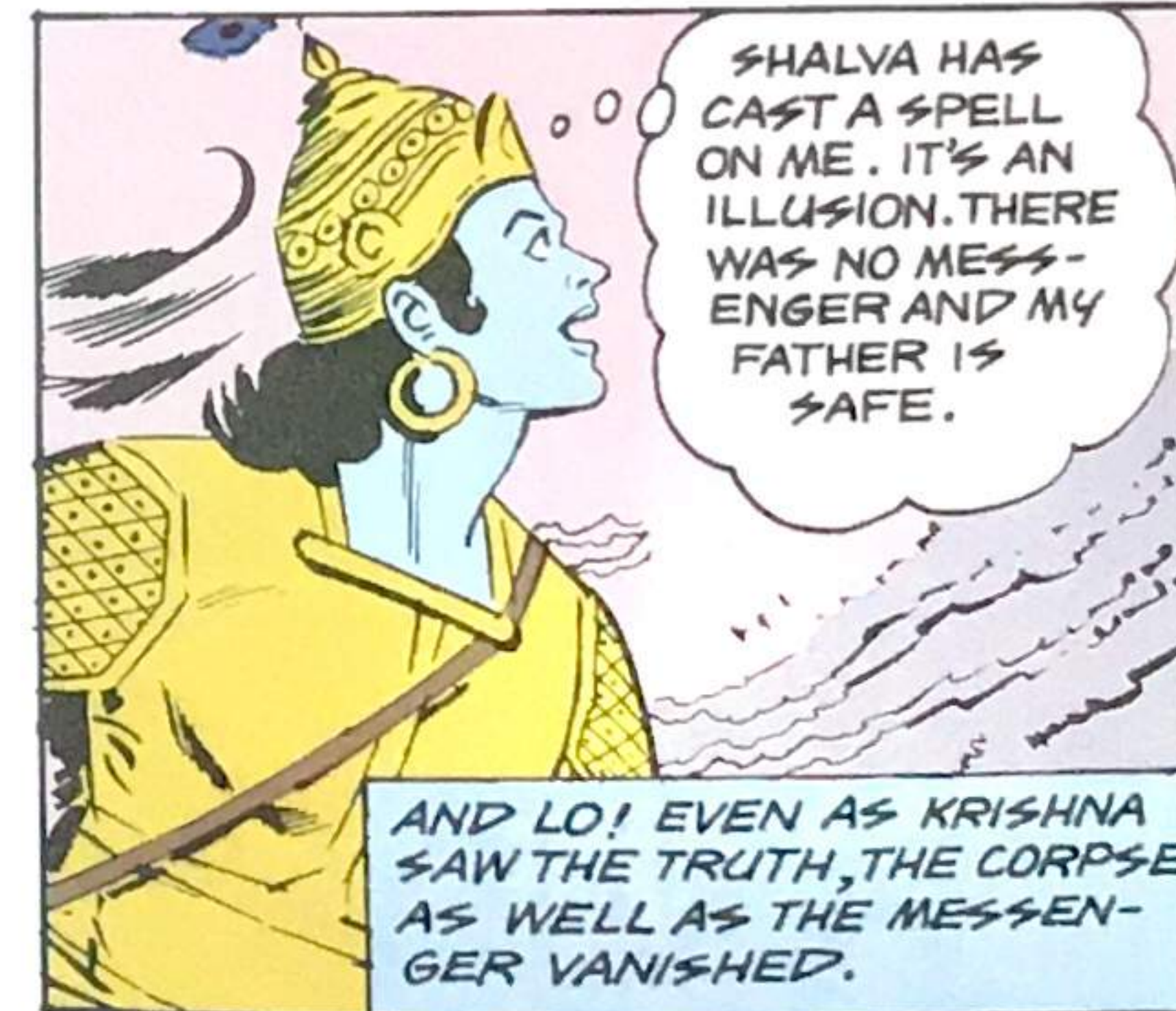
AND SHALVA BROUGHT HIS SWORD DOWN ON HIS CAPTIVE'S NECK.



AS SHALVA MOUNTED HIS CHARIOT AND ROSE INTO THE AIR, KRISHNA WHO WAS FOR A MOMENT STUNNED, SUDDENLY REALISED THE TRUTH.



SHALVA HAS CAST A SPELL ON ME. IT'S AN ILLUSION. THERE WAS NO MESSENGER AND MY FATHER IS SAFE.



AND LO! EVEN AS KRISHNA SAW THE TRUTH, THE CORPSE AS WELL AS THE MESSENGER VANISHED.

AH! THERE HE IS! I WILL NOT SPARE HIM NOW!



HE HAS FOUND ME OUT!

QUICK! TAKE THE CHARIOT AS CLOSE TO HIM AS YOU CAN.

